

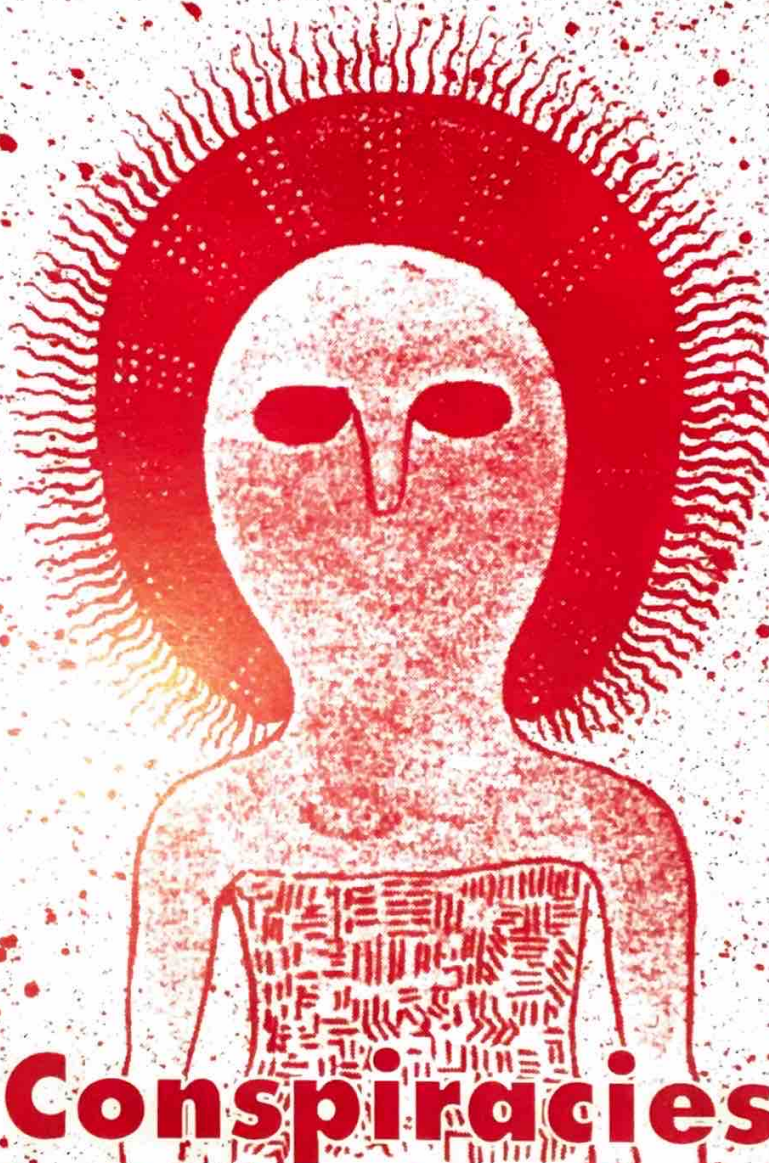
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Howdy. Yes, it's that time again: Time for your quarterly dose of weirdness and heresy. The new issue is here, bigger and stranger than ever, despite all my raving that I'd never do an issue larger than the last. We are always looking for new material, so if you're artistically inclined, please send something our way.

We've got quite a mix for you this time. This issue seems to have a conspiracy theme running through it. Stephen Sennitt returns with a wonderful piece on that forgotten genius, Stanislaw Szukalski. Adam Gorightly describes his wonderous encounters with 'UFOs' while under the influence. New contributor Alec Hidell reminds us of the real accomplishments of the controversial UFO contactee, George Adamski while Damian takes us on a long, wonderful tour of the history of opium use and its spiritual potential. Contributing editor Paul Rydeen examines the hidden symbolism in the visions of the late, great author Philip K. Dick. Paul also reviews a couple of great new books as well. Steve Mizrach joins us again with a look at conspiracy theories, while X.S. DeSpot cooks up a theory of his own. And as always, the back page offers a chance to connect with someone with similar interests.

So, we hope you like it. Please let us know what you think.
Thanks.

- Wes



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STANISLAV SZUKALSKI AND THE RISING OF R'LYEH

by Stephen Sennitt

Many of Lovecraft's visionary ideas - partially inspired by the myths and legends of all races - have been studied in the context of occult lore by numerous writers in this field, over the past twenty years or so. As far as I know, however, no one has yet examined the similarities between Lovecraft's central conception, the Cthulhu Mythos, and the theories of the ignored genius, Stanislaw Szukalski. Even the most cursory glimpse, as evidenced by the short introduction to Szukalski's ideas which you are about to read, provides an astonishing amount of corroboration.

Szukalski, who was born in Poland in 1893 and emigrated to California in his 'teens, was hailed by the government of Poland in the 1920's as that country's greatest living artist. A 'Szukalski museum' was erected in Warsaw, containing a treasure house of the artist's paintings, illustrations and bronzes. However, with no formal education and little knowledge of English, Szukalski slipped into obscurity in his new homeland, America, and toiled without recognition (suffering at that country's alleged anti-Polish snobbery) for the rest of his life, in what he described a "cultural Siberia" - Southern California. In 1987, at the age of 93, he died in almost complete

obscurity, leaving a vast legacy of work begun in 1940, which he called *Zermatism*. This took the form of a 39 volume history of the cosmos in relation to the Earth (containing 11,000 exquisite pen and ink illustrations), an excerpt from which was published in 1989 entitled, *Behold!!! The Protong* ('Pro-tong' = Proto-tongue, or primal language). Even this minuscule sampling of Szukalski's opus is a breathtaking work, both in conception and presentation. I am sure that nothing else quite like it exists elsewhere, except, perhaps, in the labyrinthine passages of the *astral Necronomicon*.

Briefly, Szukalski's main thesis proclaims the existence of a veridical basis for the deluge myths of all mankind. This he explains in terms of epochs which he names 'Near-Solar' and 'Far-Solar'. The last deluge, caused by the Ice Age, was, in this case, a *Far-Solar* event, instanced by the rapid cooling of the Earth's temperature, and the subsequent submergence of continents. Some previous deluges have been caused by the Earth getting too close

to the sun ('Near-Solar') to maintain geological stasis, thus causing the ocean beds to 'swell' and displace the oceans, flooding the continents previously above sea-level, and creating newly risen continents from the depths of the sea.



Analogies to the 'Atlantis' myth spring to mind here, but far from idle mythologizing, Szukalski explains the geological and cosmic 'mechanics' of this process in his book, *Behold!!! The Protong* (pgs 8-13). What is more interesting is that he claims that this process culminates in world deluge approximately every 26,000 years - in traditional occult terminology, the deluge and subsequent 'renewal' of the Earth thus occurs every proceeding 'aeon' (see Kenneth Grant's *The Magical Revival*, pg 17). In *Behold!!! The Protong* (pg 11), Szukalski announces that, "contrary to scientific claims that we are nearing another Ice Age, I insist that we are nearing the opposite to it, the Dehydration of the Globe in the oncoming Near-solar Epoch." In other words, the sea bed will rise, and the continents will sink; the world will be plunged into darkness, destruction and chaos. Here, one is reminded of Lovecraft's central Mythos concept, that of the rising of R'lyeh (from beneath the ocean), and the revival of the Cult of Cthulhu. Szukalski points to the identification of a vast serpent, representing the deluge, in the myths of all cultures - he himself expresses the destruction of the human race in a bronze sculpture representing an anthropoid being with the tentacles of an octopus. The serpent-octopus Being thus symbolizes the destructive force of the deluge and the raising of sunken lands from beneath the ocean (the home of dead ancestors).

If this is not corroboration enough, Szukalski claimed to have discovered the primal, antediluvian language of all mankind, which he called 'pro-tong'; a prototypical, *extremely primitive* language. Perhaps it is not surprising, in the present context, that when one translates the name 'Cthulhu' into protong, it is found to mean, "You-sunken-flood"; and that 'R'lyeh' translates as, "worship - drowned".

One of Szukalski's volumes of Zermatism is entitled 'The Anthropological Motivations'. It traces the origin of the chaotic 'evil' element in man's history, and the subsequent political turmoil in the modern age, to a parallel species of hominids which Szukalski calls the Yetinsyny - 'the Children of the Yeti'. It is pointed out that the Yetinsyny do not constitute any particular race, but instead manifest as a particular physiological and psychological type of 'a-human' creature produced by the interbreeding of the human species with some other form of anthropoid, now almost totally extinct (a few 'pure' types may still be found in the most remote regions of the Earth). The Yetinsyny are described as the "elemental enemies" of mankind, infiltrating the species with misanthropic propaganda and producing the political idealisms (communism, fascism, *et al*) that tend to destroy all humanitarian relationships, reducing the species to servitude.

In case this sounds like pure 'conspiracy paranoia', it must be pointed out that the presentation of Szukalski's theory is backed up by hundreds of detailed anatomical drawings and photographic evidence. No doubt the full volume, when it is eventually published, will prove to be an outstanding work (it is not, for instance, merely a sub-eugenical text). However, the main point in this context is to present the similarity

between Szukalski's ugly power-mongers and those characters (like Wilbur Whateley) in Lovecraft's fictional treatment of the same thesis, who toil for the destruction of humankind.

There is a marked comparison here, relating back to the concept of 'the rising of R'lyeh', as expressed by both visionaries, and to the suggestion that agencies are at work to facilitate the future repossession of this Earth by vastly ancient forces. Szukalski saw these forces in terms of a "natural disaster," despite his warnings about the Yetinsyny, who, logically, could not conceivably survive the coming deluge unscathed, any more than could mankind (merely celebrate the destruction). Lovecraft, mythologizing rather than demythologizing, paints a picture in his story, 'The Call of Cthulhu', of vitally *conscious* negative agencies at work; types which, like Szukalski's Yetinsyny, form the degenerate religiously-oriented cults. In both views, personal expression does not preclude the power of prophecy.

For further information concerning Stanislaw Szukalski's work, write to: Archives Szukalski, P.O. Box 923308, Sylmar, CA 91392, U.S.A. (publishers of *Behold!!! The Protong*).



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SILKSCREENED COVER



by Adam Gorightly

The importance of learning is obvious to even the most rebellious or stupid of souls. This I agree with most obviously. But school, ah, that's another matter!

The classroom in most instances was like a cell for me, and I couldn't appreciate in those days that all knowledge - whether it was bullshit or not - would effect me greatly in regards to competing in the American workplace and other such superfluous affairs. But I always shined when it came to creative writing classes.

In fact, so well upon occasion, that even my lies were appreciated. Such as the time in high school when I made up a tale of encounters with flying saucers, and my teacher, a white bearded gent who looked more 'mountain man' than academic, bought my weird fabricated tale that I had spun in jest, rewarding my efforts with an A+ because it resembled some otherworldly things that had occurred to him.

Several years after this incident, I ended up crying wolf when I finally did see some UFO-nauts - when even my bestest of friends thought that I'd flipped my wig, or were pulling their legs, when I related the incident to them.

First of all, let me preface this by saying that those were the days of strange drugs spinning around my mind like flying sorcerers themselves. And that my visions of these alien vessels were inspired thus:

One night a colleague and I, we shall call him Blow-Ho, ingested a Dragon that was Green, I mean on paper, LSD. And we went trippin' skippin' out into the streets of our fair city, as always, ready for strange deranged adventures. And that is just what we got, or bought - I'm not actually sure which - even to this day it is like a dream that was a little bit *too* real.

Those UFOs we saw, that made yours truly fall to one knee and see, with my friend Blow-Ho, a wild crazy show that was worth the two dollars and fifty cents, or whatever it was we paid.

But even though we were under the influence, what we saw or thought we saw was nonetheless authentic. Or at least that's what I thought immediately following the encounter. But I'm not so sure these days.

And my friend Blow-Ho who was dubious immediately following these visions, seems to believe these days that what we saw with our dilated eyes might have in fact been reality (whatever the fuck that is).

So you go figure.

Nonetheless, it was a wonderfully weirdo encounter, and we both are happy in our own twisted ways that it happened.

Yes, but what exactly did happen? Was it a dual hallucination? Or were our minds opened by the drug to such an extent that it enabled us to perceive certain dimensions that can only be entered into with the assistance of mind-altering substances obtained from the Planet Zebulon?

Or perhaps it was a window that can only be seen by a certain few at a certain point and space in time and that others who might have been but a stone's throw from us, could not perceive as did we; whether their locations were geographic, mental, or psychic in nature.

Or maybe it was biblical demons we saw flying high in the sky aboard satanic flying saucers sent from Hell!

Or perhaps what we saw were terrestrial vehicles piloted by Earthlings that were created by the Nazis toward the end of World War Two?

But I'm raving now.

Am I ... raving???

The UFO-nut encounter I related here happened in the late seventies. In 1986, I read a book on the supernatural and psychic phenomenon by Jenny Randles, and in the back of said document she asked for peoploids to send in weird things that'd happened to them. So that is how this following letter came into being. I never did end up sending it to her, which was probably all for the better. Here it is, in it's entirety:

12-28-86

Dear Ms. Randles,

I would like to relate an experience that happened to myself and a colleague in 1979 in Fresno, CA. Let me preface this statement by saying we were under the influence of the hallucinogenic drug, LSD. But hear me out: these are not the ravings of a drug saturated fruitcake; I am not an habitual drug user, nor have I used LSD for several years. But to deny that I was not under it's influence when this incident occurred would be to give an incomplete account of what transpired on that fateful night.

On the night in question - fully under the influence of said drug - we observed several 'flying saucers', in several shapes, sizes and multicolored variations. I am not denying that what we saw were hallucinations, but if they were, then they were 'dual hallucinations', for we both saw the same sights and sounds.

Now, a brief description of this event: The sighting occurred along a levee located in a residential section of town. Before we even arrived at the levee (we were on foot) we joked to ourselves about how we might see a UFO during our little 'trip'. We laughed to ourselves (somewhat uncontrollably) how no one would ever believe us due to the condition we were in. Anyway, after walking a short time on the levee, we saw our first 'UFO'.

The sight of this made me fall to one knee and we were both astounded by it's sight. During the course of the night we saw several, anywhere from six to eight. One was cigar shaped, some saucer shaped, one with a multi-colored propeller. This all occurred in the span of not more than an hour and a half, I think, though the passing of time was hard to estimate due to the effects of the drug.

The last one we saw appeared like a falling star in the sky that seemed to stop in mid-flight then turned into a spaceship, or whatever it was. After the sighting of this 'UFO' we turned around and headed back, the way we came.

Now I realize the descriptions I am giving are sketchy, but in retrospect it seemed almost like a dream, everything happening so fast. If I was to include every little detail, I'd be here all night. So I'll try to wrap it up and sum up the experience in a few more words.

When we arrived back at the point where we saw the first

UFO, a beam of light shot down directly in front of us some 50 yards away, emanating from nothing we could see. I said, "Wow, did you see that?" and my colleague responded that he saw it, too. Of course, we said things like, "Wow, did you see that?" and, "Oh, my God!" many times that night. Through the whole experience, we felt a presence communicating non-verbally to us. Obviously, we were the only ones who saw 'them'. There were many houses in the vicinity, with many people living there who could have seen 'them', but appears that 'they' were for our eyes only. Perhaps 'they' were hallucinations, but if they were, it was a 'dual hallucination', for we both saw the same thing.

If you get the chance, write me and comment upon these 'dual hallucinations'.

P.S. Enjoyed your book *Beyond Explanation* very much.

One night I assisted me ol' buddy Barnsworth of Bogler in his janitorial duties at the Fresno Air Terminal, and was granted the distinct honor of entering the inner sanctum of the air control tower itself, thereby engagin' one of the air controllers in a rap session. I asked of him, "Hey, man, like you ever see any UFO's up here?"

"All the time," he replied, in a tone I took to be serious. Then a second or two later he turned around and whistled another tune, saying, "No, not really." Now, the dude was either pulling my leg from the git-go, or had in actuality seen lots of UFO's in his duties, and had just added that disclaimer to cover his arse in the case of any repercussions coming his way for spilling the beans about the UFOs haunting the skies of Fresno.

As I senior in high school I took on the task of writing a paper on UFOs, and my teacher, whose class I was writing this for, informed me of the fact that one of our faculty members, Coach Flowers, had been -whilst in the Air Force- an investigator for the fabled Project Blue Book, the top secret investigation of UFO-nut sightings and reports.

When I finally got around to asking the coach about his days in Project BlueBook -and if he had come across any mind blowin' shit- he just scoffed it off, with the comment that he'd go to check shit out and instead of actually seeing alien craft what these people had seen were seagulls, weather balloons, etc. I said "sure, right, coach", realizing that he, too, was behind *The Conspiracy*. Just another mouthpiece for our Government who are hiding the fact that Aliens are everywhere, and are slowly but surely placing their agents- disguised as humans- in the most

prominent and important places, so that one day when we aren't aware they're going to take over Earth and turn us all into their mindless, passive slaves!

Well, that's one theory, I guess.

The other one is that Coach Flowers was in fact, telling me the truth.

I think it was in Ojai, California when Madkins and I were cruisin' around in The Madkinsmobile, that I beheld our Lord and Savior, Jesus The Nazereno.

Passing by a park, I saw this long haired bearded guy in a white flowing robe, who as he saw us passing by in the Madkinsmobile, acknowledged my presence by smiling angelically and

On the night in question - fully under the influence of the drug - we observed several 'flying saucers', in several shapes, sizes and multicolored variations. I am not denying that what we saw were hallucinations, but if they were, then they were 'dual hallucinations', for we both saw the same sights and sounds.

beckoning me and Madkins over to him with a wave of his holy hand. 'Come and join me, my children,' his messianic expression read, an aura of mystical golden light hovering over his head like a heavenly crown of glory.

"Hey, that's Jesus," I said. "Let's go check him out, dude."

"Right. A permanent-press Jesus. He looks like he just got his robe out of the cleaners."

I waved goodbye to Jesus, as Madkins opted not to stop.

"Check it out," I said to Madkins, as we were rollin' down the road, heading for the golden sands of Ventura. "Just suspend your beliefs for one moment, and consider this: Now, if that really was the second coming of our beloved Lord and Savior back there in the park, don't you think he would possess the power to surround himself with a mystical force that would forever keep his garments clean and pressed. Think about it."

Madkins snickered cynically and cranked up 'Animals' by Pink Floyd.

That mystical encounter happened about 10 years ago, and ever since that day, Madkins wishes he had stopped to talk with this Jesus in the park, thinking that perhaps he might have turned his back on the Second Coming of Christ.

Well, like I said before, anything is

possible.

I've had my share of weird dreams in my time, but one of the weirdest and most frightening happened after my close encounter of the first kind related to you, dear readers, earlier in this article.

One hot summer night whilst living with my parents in suburbia, I decided to sleep outside, where it would be cooler and more pleasurable. Big mistake; the aliens were out to get me!

Let me set the stage: with my favorite blanket, I lay down to sleep in my backyard on a chaise-lounge, gazing up into the wondrous stars of the night above. Soon I was sound asleep, and shortly had entered into the misty realms of dreamland weirdness. But unlike other dreams, where the world you often enter into is a combo of this or that, a little bit of maybe your friends house interspersed with maybe a little bit of your own house, inhabited by people you know, or may not know, doing this or that; ah no, this dream was lucid and distinct, as clear as crystal. It shaped itself in my dreaming mind. (Or was I dreaming?)

Within the dream everything was exactly the same as it was before I fell off to sleep. Everything in the backyard was the same as it had always been; not one thing out of place. And I was exactly where I had left my sleeping body;

on the chase lounge with my favorite blanket covering me, facing in the exact same direction; everything exactly the same, nothing different or out of place. But then things got a little weird, sports fans. As I gazed into the wondrous stars above me, there suddenly appeared a huge UFO. The UFO, moving at a very slow rate of speed appeared out of the east, the direction I was facing, and seemed to be coming towards me, slowly lowering. It was spectacular, much like the 'real' UFOs I had seen with my friend Blow-Ho. And though it was a huge wondrous brilliant multicolored creation of some far superior race, I also picked up malevolent vibes off the thing, and I was starting to get scared, when I felt somebody or something tap me on the shoulder. I jerked to my right side to see who or what was there, and the jerking motion woke me up, as I was facing to my right side to see what the fuck had tapped me on the shoulder. But nothing was there.

And the UFO was gone!

It took me awhile to get back to sleep.

I have a knack for tuning into strange things, whether they be arcane periodicals, off the wall TV shows, or bizarre radio broadcasts from The Planet Bonkers. I'm a yak radio fan, and

occasionally when I get tired of hearing Larry King ask, "What's the question?" or Rush Limbaugh spouting his thinly veiled racist diatribes, I run through the dial on my GE Super Radio (the best damned radio in the world) and see what I can find to blow my mind. One interesting fanatic I came across was this Christian fundamentalist radio talk show host, Bob Larson, who's written several books on Satanism in Rock Music, Demonic Possession, and other interesting subjects along these lines.

One day he was interviewing some Frenchy who claimed to be an alien as well as the second coming of Christ. What Mr. Larson does is get these fringe wackos on his show then tries to expose them for what they are: messengers of Satan trying to corrupt the minds of the young - and the not so young - to pave the way for Groovy Captain Lucifer and The End Times. Needless to say, this makes for some interesting listening.

Another radio program I came across was 'The Billy Goodman Happening', which was broadcast out of Las Vegas and as far as I know ain't 'Happenin' no mo'. Billy Goodman is/ was one of those DJ's who has been around the broadcasting block a few times, and had earlier in his career made a record about a Martian coming to Earth, where the announcer (played by Billy) asked this Martian questions, and the Martian answered with snippets taken from various rock n' roll songs popular at that time. Anyway, Billy came on the air one night early in the infancy of his show - at a time when he didn't really know where it was going, or what direction it would take in the future - and got the whole ball rolling in a fringe topics direction, by discussing the death, or supposed death, of Elvis. From there the show exploded with not only Elvis weirdos calling in and babbling on the air about their own personal visitations with The King; but as well with a whole slew of assorted paranoid listeners and subsequent guests ranting on other such varied subjects as UFOs and alien abductions, Alternative 3, ghosts and haunted houses, weird sciences and perpetual motion machines, Tesla and his inventions, hidden cancer cures, weather modification wars, not to mention the usual CFR and Trilateralist conspiracy mongers (with too much spare time of their hands) calling in to expose the aims and motives of those behind 'The New World Order's One World Government Computerized Currency Take-Over!'

Around this juncture is when a lot of UFO sightings started to be reported near Las Vegas, in the Groom Lake area, which is part of Area 51, a top-secret military testing site in Nevada. A lot of weird shit has been seen there the last couple of years and there has even been some pretty good videos taken of these

strange luminous balls doing incredible maneuvers at unbelievable speeds in the skies over Area 51.

At around this time, a fellow named Robert Lazar crawled out of the woodwork claiming to have worked at Area 51, and had seen an alien saucer. Mr. Lazar turned out to be a pretty incredible - and at the same time credible - witness. Though the government tried to discredit him, they weren't completely successful in their efforts. The government claimed that Lazar had never worked at Area 51, or for the U.S. Government - at any level - ever. But Mr. Lazar was able to produce evidence that, in fact, he had worked as a scientist/physicist on secret government projects in the past.

(A prize winning documentary aired at around this time, in '89. It was produced by a Vegas TV station centering around the UFO sightings in Area 51, in addition to Mr. Lazar's highly controversial claims.)

We saw several UFOs, anywhere from six to eight. One was cigar shaped, some saucer shaped, one with a multi-colored propeller. This all occurred in the span of not more than an hour and a half, I think, though the passing of time was hard to estimate due to the effects of the drug.

For awhile Mr. Lazar became a somewhat frequent guest on 'The Bill Goodman Happening' detailing what he had seen - and had participated in - there at Area 51. But when Lazar started to get threatened by certain segments of our Government, he kind of clammed up and pulled himself out of the media spotlight. Also, Billy Goodman at this time, started getting some other regular guests who were on the fringes of wacko-ness, or who were just plain 'cracked' and I think Mr. Lazar probably didn't want to associate himself with these 'nut-burgers', so he gracefully bowed out. (Recently I saw a television special in which Lazar appeared briefly. And he hasn't changed his tune one bit, still fighting the good fight. Hang in there, Bob)

Among these other 'nut-burgers' I refer to, who became regulars on 'The Happening', were Bill Cooper and Virgil Armstrong, among others.

Bill Cooper claimed, among other things, that the US Government since the late forties has had a secret pact with the aliens, and that these very same aliens participated in the assassination

of JFK. Also, that there are alien space stations on the moon and Mars, and that these space stations are funded by the distribution of drugs to our country.

Virgil Armstrong believes - or says he believes - that the Earth, the moon and all the other planets in our solar system are hollow. But that's not all; they're spaceships, too. Gravity is also a farce, he says. And oxygen is everywhere! Why, we'd have no more trouble breathing on the surface of Jupiter than we'd have on our own Mother Earth! (And yes, he has evidence to support these claims!) Apparently, Mr. Armstrong is involved in some sort of desert saucer cult in Arizona, and I believe has set himself up as it's all-knowing guru.

I recently acquired a tape of the conspiracy researcher John Judge, giving his view on UFOs and such characters as Bill Cooper, and Virgil Armstrong. According to Judge, Cooper and Armstrong fall into the same boat;

they are both ex-military intelligence people - which means that they are still affiliated with the intelligence community - and are involved in duplicity with our government in perpetuating the myth that UFOs are piloted by beings not of this earth. What they accomplish by perpetuating this myth, is to take attention away from the real operators of these strange vessels, who are earth people; and in most cases employees of the U.S. Government.

There are records that show that near the end of WW2, the Nazi's were at that time developing Flying Saucers, and it is these very same Saucers that the US Army confiscated from the Nazi's and have ever since been using to buzz around the skies and terrorize the general populace. Now, what these ex-military-intelligence-guys-turned-phony-saucer-cult-gurus do, according to Judge, is predict a date when the saucer people shall land - this of course after he's had a vision detailing their eminent arrival. (All of this being pre-arranged in advance with his saucer contacts inside the Government). Then he gets his disciples together, has them

lick some Sonoran desert toads and tada, the vessel appears and blows their little minds, and the guru is the next best thing to God. Or maybe he is God.

Originally 'The Billy Goodman Happening' was on from 10:00 PM to 1:00 AM, Monday thru Friday, but the more controversial the show became, the later the hours got. It was a low budget affair, so Billy had to -in a lot of cases- answer the phones and do everything himself. As he continued on in his plight to reveal the secrets in his surrounding the UFOs in Area 51 and other such controversial matters, Billy began receiving harassing type phone calls, which seemed to be more than your simple I-don't-have-a-life-type phone call pranks. These phone calls were threatening in nature and seemed designed to drive Billy off the air. Evidently though the show seemed to be really gaining in popularity- the powers that be at the station, KVEG, must've started getting a little nervous,

areas of his mind that are usually closed. These same areas, that, because of LSD, were opened that night so many years ago when we saw the 'UFOs'. But instead of being under the influence of man-made drugs on this recent night, Blow-Ho had tapped into the 'nagui' as Castaneda calls it, and was 'seeing'. 'Seeing' a 'separate reality', Or at least a different reality from the one normally perceived by a rather large percentage of the human race, as we go about our earthly existences, like ostriches with our heads buried, trapped in those reality tunnels that we find so very safe and secure.

On Blow-Ho's recent excursion down UFO Lane, he didn't actually 'see' anything, but he did 'hear' some weird noises and felt a 'presence' there, that -to say the least- scared the old boy, a bit.

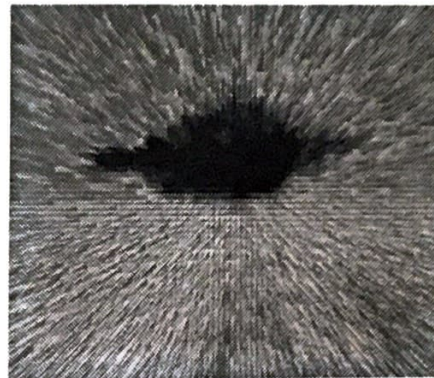
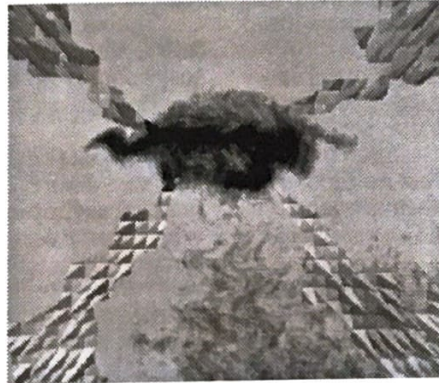
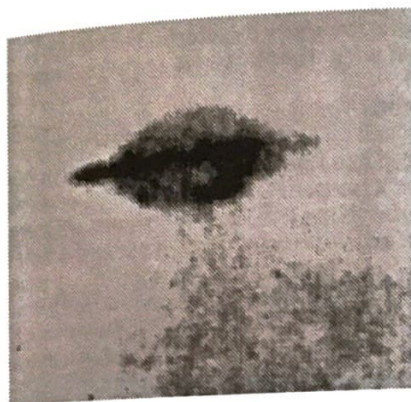
The last time I ingested LSD was in 1980, and guess what I did? I walked down UFO Lane. It was a solitary trip. There were very few people at this point

constructed of little rocks like the kind you find in a fishbowl, but of different colors- depicted a clown, who lay upon the ground, admiring a flower, which he held admiringly in his purple gloved hands. At that moment, I thought it was the most profound thing I'd ever seen in my life.

As I walked down UFO Lane that night my thoughts returned back to our encounter with the UFO-nauts of just a year before.

'What exactly did we see?' I wondered as my footfalls retraced the steps I had tripped with my bro' Blow-Ho. Still, to this day, I wonder what we saw, and I realize now I'll probably never figure it out, I have upon occasion considered hypnotic regression. But that probably costs big bucks so I've decided to put that off until I'm rich and successful, in other words, not in this lifetime.

But anyway, as I was retracing those footfalls o' mine, and pondering the



and decided to moved Billy's time spot to 12:00 AM - 3:00 AM, then eventually 3:00 AM - 5:00 AM. Due to my work schedule, I was unable to listen to Billy for a few months after this third time change. When I did try to tune in again, he was gone, driven off the air, I'm sure, by government agent provocateurs.

UFO Lane. That's what we call the circuit we walked, along the ditch-bank, where we saw the groovy UFO-nauts.

I received a call the other night from my compadre Blow-Ho, who took part in that very memorable close encounter with me. Blow-Ho asked if anything strange had been happening to me lately. No, I replied. He then related to me that he'd just got back from a walk down UFO Lane. "Oh?" said I.

He then told me about some very intense and bizarre dreams he'd been having lately regarding UFO Lane -and about myself, as well. One dream where I was levitating, in fact.

It seems my friend Blow-Ho has of late been getting deep into the Carlos Castaneda Books, and it is my opinion that he has recently opened up certain

in my psychedelic wanderings who I was willing to drop acid with. I think Blow-Ho was probably the only person I would have been willing to drop with at this time, and he wasn't around, so I decided to 'trip' alone.

I started off the evening in a church park. The first effects the drug had upon me, was to put me in tune with the beautiful old oak trees that resided there. I hate to admit it, but I hugged a tree that night. (Uggghhh! And you know, there's nothing worse than a tree-hugger!)

To make a long story a little bit shorter, suffice it to say nothing miraculous happened that night on of UFO Lane. I was, of course, feeling rather cosmic, but that had nothing to do with The Lane. It was the drug that made me feel that the essence of God was surrounding me that night, as it was likewise the drug that made me hug a tree just like I was some sort of Earth First! wacko.

Early the next morning when I got home, I found a picture in my back yard, that was made by, I think, my evil step-sister. This picture -which was

meaning of what we experienced, I began to read evil into our 'encounter'. I had just recently finished reading the book *UFOs: What On Earth Is Happening?* by a couple of christers who put forth the theory that UFOs are Demons. Winged servants of the Angel Lucifer invading the skies and minds of us sinful earthlings who have not as yet accepted Jesus into our hearts.

'Yes, maybe they *were* demons,' I thought as I walked down UFO Lane. But that's the power of LSD. The mind, under its influence is totally susceptible to any cockamamie notion that might pass its way; that gray convoluted matter within your cranium sitting there like a pile of silly putty waiting to be formed into whatever shape the winds of weirdness might blow into your tuned-in ears. (Set the dial for station K-LSD, kids!) And when the winds blow through your ears and catch the sands of your imagination, off you go upon the psychedelic sea, sailing the inner landscapes on the twisted ship of your mind's creations -or the creations of others whose 'trips' you've bought into,

or who have fed your gullible mind with their bulldada-and in this gullible psychedelized state your brain gobbles it up and makes it real! But there's a yin/yang with everything. One example from the sixties: The Merry Pranksters saw the positive potential and possibilities of acid in setting the mind free from the preconceived notions and conventions that society at that time had fallen captives to, and that tuned-in freedom freaks -like Kesey and the Pranksters- had found a way out of. vi-sa-vi: acid, sex, rock music and pranks. That was the ying. But the negative side of acid -the yang, have you- could be seen with The Manson Clan, where instead of acid setting souls free to see the creative god force inside them, the drug opened up the young reeling minds of these spaced-out zombie-kids to bad craziness, as they naively accepted whatever came their way via the teachings of Chuck the Messiah. Unfortunately, instead of positive outlooks and 'new ways of seeing things' being fed into these open minds of unformed silly putty, what was fed in their place were negative psycho killer power trip programs such as "The Beatles are instructing us to kill" or "Hitler=Christ=Satan=Manson" and so forth. The brains of the Mansonoids -like programmed computers- gobbled up this shit and spat out similar negative psychotic reactions, which resulted in the ritual slayings of beautiful Sharon Tate, The LaBianca's, et al. Garbage in, garbage out, as they say. Their human bio-computers (i.e., the brains of Susan Atkins, Tex Watkins and the others) were attacked by the Charlie Manson virus, and the rest is history.

But I'm rambling now. And my cup of coffee is waiting.

Like a lot of other gullible shmucks inhabiting planet earth during the late great seventies, I was a sucker fish for the bullshit laid down by Uri Geller, i.e. that he was some kinda New Age Messiah in communication with the alien brothers who -using Uri as their earthly medium- were going to save our planet from nuclear annihilation and teach us all how to bend spoons and fix broken watches just like The Prophet Uri. (Sheesh!)

Uri's discoverer and mentor was Dr. Andrija Puharich, who several years before meeting Uri, had gone to Mexico and spent some time with a shamanic cult, gobbling magic mushrooms and sharing their sacred visions. Puharich lived to tell -and write a book- about these mystic psychedelic experiences, which I haven't gotten around to reading yet. After that, Dr. Puharich came back to Earth -er, I mean the States- and got into paranormal/psychical research. He can even be seen in an old episode of Perry Mason, playing himself.

Anywaaaay, Dr. Puharich, while vacationing in Israel, came across Uri Geller and brought him back to his research labs in the states to conduct psychic experiments on this amazing, young Israeli 'psychic'.

The rest, as they say, is history. Uri -the master magician-suckered poor Dr. Puharich (and myself, and millions of others as well) into believing that he was an authentic psychic, and that the space brothers were responsible for energizing him with the cosmic powers that enabled him to perform his miraculous psychic feats.

Which leads me, at last, to what all this babbling about Uri Geller and Dr. Puharich is all about. While reading the book *Uri*, which is the bullshit chronicle of Uri's encounters with the space brothers, and the miraculous happenings that surrounded these 'divine meetings', there was a certain passage, that told how a pile of needles -or pins- (I don't remember which exactly) through alien telekinesis, were moved together by the 'space brothers' to spell out some significant words forming a sentence, which had been recreated in a picture on the page of the Uri book resting in my lap. (I can't for the life of me remember what the needles said, though of course it had something to do with the aliens.) As I was reading this section, I heard outside my bedroom roof, a strange unearthly buzzing overhead. My dog, Jobriath, began growling. He, as well, sensed something unearthly, an alien presence outside, over my bedroom roof, hovering

there momentarily, electromagnetically gravitating. I hesitated, not wanting to know what was out there. When I finally got around to getting up and looking out my window into the night's sky, it was gone.

In retrospect, dear readers, I'm sure I sound like somebody who's been reading too much Philip K. Dick.

I guess you had to be there.

It has been stated upon occasion that my cosmic confederate Madkins has been known at times to stretch the truth. So take the following with a grain of salt, and call me when the brain swelling goes down.

According to Madkins, he was up late one night/ early morning cleaning up after a party he'd had at his house while his parents were out of town. The TV set was on the CBS affiliate -blaring in the background- as Madkins went about his business, pickin' up beer cans and emptying ashtrays of cigarette butts and marijuana roaches, spraying Pine Sol about the room to rid it of the pungent aroma of ganja. He decided to take a break and spark one of these roaches, when a news bulletin flashed across the screen, followed by the iconic image of none other than Walter Klondike, Mr. Familiar-Face for so many years on the CBS evening news.

Madkins claims that Klondike announced to the nation at that wee hour in the morn that an alien vehicle had crash landed somewhere out in the Arizona desert and that its occupants died as a result and had been shipped to a nearby Air Force base.

To this day, Madkins stands by this story. (For you UFO's buffs, its similarities with the Roswell Incident sound suspiciously familiar)

I'm still a bit dubious.

The last time I voted in a Presidential election, was in the 1980 race pitting Carter against Reagan. As election day drew near, I was flipping through the local newspaper one evening when I came across an article which I clipped out at the time, but unfortunately no longer have in my files, about a guy who was running for the presidency on 'The Flying Saucer Ticket' by the name of Allen Michael, who claimed to be in touch with the Saucer People, and if elected would save us -with the help of his alien friends, of course- from Nuclear annihilation. He also promised a flying saucer in every garage. (No, not ready, heh-heh.) Mr. Micheals, whose photograph was at the top of this clipped-out article, resembled a cross between Yul Brynner and Mr. Spock, with his bald, shining head and somewhat unearthly features. On election night Madkins and I decided it was time to act. If the planet was to be saved, it was up to us to cast the deciding vote.

Now, actually, 'The Ticket' Michaels was running on wasn't actually called 'The Flying Saucer Ticket', and I don't remember exactly what party he was representing, but in order to be able to vote for him we needed to find this information out. And that's exactly what we did, by dialing directory assistance, which gave us the number of The Universal Industrial Church, which the aforementioned newspaper article said Michaels was aligned with, being it's pastor or holding somesuch title. Madkins phoned this Universal Industrial Church, which as I recall was located somewhere in California (surprise, surprise). He got some strange sounding humanoid on the other end of the line who passed on the necessary info to Madkins, and wished him God Speed!

Then off to the voting place we went to save humanity, to plant our seeds of universal harmony in the ballot boxes there.

That we are all alive today is proof enough that our votes weren't cast in vain.

And now, dear readers, once again it's time for my medication. Visiting hours are Monday through Friday, between 12 to 4 in the afternoon, if you wish to visit me here at the 'home'.

But don't bring *them* with you!



GODDAM SPOOKS

by Alec Hidell

Until his death in 1965, George Adamski insisted that his Venusian visitors were real, physical entities and were not merely some sort of psychic projection into our reality, or "goddam spooks". In the final analysis, though, it didn't really matter.

I have never been able to understand the idea that communication by telepathy would be possible between people from different planets, or even from different countries here on earth. I am an Englishman. I am able to understand no terrestrial language other than English. My thought processes are couched entirely in English. Likewise my sub-vocal speech. If I were to encounter an African tribesman who spoke only Bantu, telepathic communication between us would be impossible for the simple reason that neither one would be able to tell what the other was *thinking*.

How then was George Adamski able to communicate telepathically with Orthon at the time of their historic first meeting on November 20, 1952? Does there exist a kind of cosmic Esperanto as some contactees would have us believe? If so, why do the space brothers have such frequent recourse to telepathy? Why don't they simply verbalize their overtures in the first place, and have done with it?

I pose these questions not to undermine Adamski's credibility, but to point up the fact that his experiences were essentially mystical in character. As such they don't lend themselves to rational analysis. Adamski was in fact one of the most influential *occultists* of recent times. He and his confederate George Hunt Williamson wrought enormous changes in popular consciousness with their books and research. In so doing they helped to usher in the present magical aeon, the aeon of the flying saucer, with its associated mythology of Ascended Masters and Great White Brotherhoods.

The occult roots of Nazism have been documented extensively in recent years. What few authors on the subject have acknowledged is that the informing magical current did not

simply cease to exist with the defeat of Hitler. Elements of it survived and emerged a few years later in America, disguised as a form of mysticism. George Adamski was the first and best known of its prophets. His blond, Aryan spacemen conformed in every outward particular to the Nazi ideal (hence the swastika on the sole of Orthon's right boot). George Hunt Williamson's early writings on 'root races' were reminiscent of Hitler's table talk. A third member of the Adamski circle, John McCoy, was convinced that a sinister cartel of 'International Bankers' lay behind many UFO encounters of the 50s. 'International Bankers' is of course a common synonym among far-rightists for people of the Hebrew persuasion.

Perhaps significantly, Adamski and Williamson were peripherally involved with American fascist leader William Dudley Pelley in the immediate post-war era. Pelley was himself an occultist of sorts, and in 1950 published at his own expense *Star Guests*, a volume of automatic writing in the genre indicated by its title. His racial theories were transmitted to the group mind by Adamski and Williamson and became a staple of UFOlogy during the 50s and 60s. A typical Saucerian Press publication dating from 1963 contains what purports to be a channeled message from the late Dr Maurice K. Jessup, detailing the aftermath of his physical death. The communicating entity or intelligence, call it what you will, describes being taken by flying saucer to Venus, and there meeting "three people about six feet in height, very beautiful people, all male, dressed in odd costumes of a spun glasslike appearance." The usual greetings are then exchanged, and a lavish banquet held, at which the servants are "shorter people, not as beautiful, and of a distinct negroid or mongoloid appearance." The symbolism here need hardly be stressed.

In addition to its racial subtext, the foregoing account points up the most important factor of all about UFOlogy in the 50s - that it was concerned essentially with spiritual and occult matters. Venus was seen as the abode of the dead, UFOs as a means of traveling between this world and the next, and spiritualism as a method of probing the secrets of the universe. The most influential work in the field was carried out not by scientists, but by deep-trance mediums like Meade Layne and Mark Probert, and Theosophists like George Hunt Williamson. Science has consistently failed to address the real issues posed by UFOlogy, which relate not to propulsion systems, aerodynamics and the like, but to the human psyche and magical currents that inform it.

Hilary Evans, writing in *Gods • Spirits • Cosmic Guardians* correctly identifies Adamski's *Flying Saucers Have Landed* as "a landmark in the development of man's ideas about the universe." He also notes that Adamski "made a particularly strong appeal to the Germans, the Swiss and the Danes." The reasons for this may readily be conjectured. In the end it scarcely matters whether Adamski's experiences were real or fabricated. The salient point is the impact they had on American society during the 50s and 60s. Adamski himself was merely the conduit through which a powerful new mythology expressed itself to human awareness. By the time he died in 1965, the concepts expressed in *Flying Saucers Have Landed* (one-to-one meetings with beings from other planets; abdication of personal responsibility to supernal forces) were firmly entrenched in the popular imagination. George Adamski had done his work well.



AUDIO CASSETTE TAPE "MIND CONTROL IN AMERICA" REVEALS TECHNIQUES OF MIND CONTROL

Psychological warfare has been waged against America for much of this century, facilitated by the emergence of mass media and the transformation of American education by behavioral psychologists and social scientists. In the book 1984, George Orwell warned that people were in danger of losing their freedom of mind without being aware of it while it was happening because of psychological, emotional and intellectual manipulation: **Mind Control**.

Is it possible that all verbal and non-verbal communication has been identified, defined and reduced to a code that can be manipulated? Is it possible to program an entire population to respond to certain words, images, vocal qualities, body movements, gestures and expressions? The result of such programming would be a population that is highly suggestible, a population that can be manipulated with precision.

What the conscious mind believes, the subconscious acts on. It works like programming a computer. You feed information into a computer and the computer acts on it. However, if the information you feed into the computer is wrong, it still acts on it! If you believe something that is not true, the memory banks of your subconscious mind do not correct the error but act on it!

Bertrand Russell, philosopher, educator and atheist, wrote in his book *The Impact of Science on Society*: "I think the subject which will be of most importance politically is Mass Psychology...It's importance has been enormously increased by the growth of modern methods of propaganda...Although this science will be diligently studied, it will be rigidly confined to the governing class. The populace will not be allowed to know how its convictions were generated."

People can be led to believe something that is not true when that information is carefully timed and presented by an accepted and respected authority. The purpose of propaganda is to direct public attention to certain "facts". "The whole art consists in doing this so skillfully that everyone will be convinced that the fact is real," wrote Adolf Hitler in *Mein Kampf*. To be effective, propaganda must constantly short-circuit all conscious thinking and operate on the individual subconsciously.

The purpose of government is inexorably tied to the purpose of life. The sum of good government is knowledge of the purpose of life and the administration of society towards that goal. If the men in leadership positions in the world do not know the objective of life, then they are not capable of administering a peaceful society. If however, they do know, then what we see happening in the world is the deliberate attempt to undermine the primary objective of life.

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From out of the rich, black, fat body of earth, so beloved of the alchemists as their Alma Mater or Matrix, grows the poppy - sacred flower of sleep, reverie, transformation and forgetfulness. As the initiatrix on the paths of both life and death in their most intense states, the poppy confers knowledge of the magical worlds within by offering an insulating refuge and state of repose from the whirlwind of activity in the outer world. As there exists the general principle within the realm of the poppy, that if one has not assiduously prepared for the confrontation with life and death, with one's own "dweller on the threshold", then one must be a fool to enter its gateway. There are many who fall into the path of the poppy through sheer accident or malaise, but how few of these hapless victims can truly face themselves without shattering? There are, indeed, adepts of the poppy; masters who can use its powers to enhance their meditative abilities without falling into the deadly lassitude that shadows its use like a faithful dog. These adepts are, at best, one in a million, yet they reveal to us key to the how and why of oracular states, the cycle of life and the mysteries of the dream. It is by searching out the hidden history of this adeptship that we can glean some of its secrets.

In order to reveal even the simplest outward aspects of the path of the poppy, it is necessary to recognize the innumerable layers of confusion, distortion and innuendo concerning the opiates that plague their understanding in the Modern World. One scarcely knows where to begin with the Herculean task of cleaning out these stables. In this age of fashionable self-help and proliferating 12-step programs, we have learned to focus upon the pain, the ruination, the addiction and the self-destruction, losing thereby any sight of the consciousness behind it or of the possibility of any sacralty in its vision. Different cultures have reacted in widely varying ways to the poppy and we must not confuse the beliefs of modern, technical, industrial civilization, with its need for active, socialized workers, with the attitudes of slower-paced, more contemplative cultures. Perhaps the only way to unravel the tangled maze of misconceptions is to travel back in time, searching for the very first traces of opiate use for spiritual and creative purposes.

We must begin our quest in the era of the Shamans, for there is much evidence for the archaic use of opium in pre-literate traditions that have survived into later mystical practices. Mircea Eliade, in his classic study, *Shamanism*, discusses the role of opium in Islamic Sufi practice as influenced by earlier, shamanic, traditions which are well-known for their use of mind-altering substances: "... we must remember the role of hashish and other narcotics in Islamic mysticism, although the purest saints never had recourse to

THE FLOWERS OF REPOSE

The Opiates, the Cycle of Life and the History of Reverie

by Damian

such substitutes." In the next paragraph, Eliade goes on to link this with shamanism: "... with the propagation of Islam among the Turks of Central Asia, certain shamanic elements were assimilated by Moslem mystics." In a note to the above passage, Eliade further states that "The influence of narcotics (hashish, opium) becomes discernible in certain Persian mystical orders from the Twelfth Century on... the rags, ecstatic 'dance' of jubilation, *tamziq*, 'tearing of garments' during trance, *nazar ila'l mord*, the 'Platonic gaze', a highly suspect form of ecstasy through erotic inhibition, are some indications of the trances induced by narcotics; these elementary recipes for ecstasy can be connected with both pre-Islamic mystical techniques and with certain aberrant Indian techniques that may have influenced Sufism." The "aberrant" Indian techniques to which Eliade is herein referring are undoubtedly those of the Tantra, an old tradition with its own strong shamanic roots that reach back to Central Asia and a period of great antiquity. From the specifically shamanic quality of the practices associated with opium use in the Sufi orders, we can infer very old use of opiates for mystical, rather than purely medicinal purposes. Again referring to older shamanic influences upon the Yoga tradition of India, Eliade states that: "We will simply observe that even Patanjali's classic text (*The Yoga Sūtras*) cites certain 'powers' familiar to shamanism - flying through the air, disappearing, becoming extremely tall or extremely short, and the like. In addition; a reference in *The Yoga Sūtras* to medicinal plants (*ausadhi*) that, in equal measure with *samādhi* (ecstasy) can give the yogin 'miraculous powers', attests to the use of narcotics in yogic circles precisely for the purpose of obtaining ecstatic experiences." From such later, even contemporary evidence, we can infer that early shamans had discovered the properties of the opium poppy and had exploited them to enhance their trance states. We know that as early as the 16th Century B.C., Egyptian doctors

were prescribing opium to calm crying babies. At that era, we are still close to the even older traditions of shamanic healing with opiates.

Egypt and Asia Minor (roughly where modern-day Turkey resides) were the earliest focal-points from which the use and cultivation of the opium poppy radiated. The poppy grows as a native plant in the rich, black, alluvial soil of Thebes in Egypt (It is an interesting parallel to note that our word "alchemy" is derived from the arabic "al-khem", the black land, or the blackness of the rich alluvial soil of the Nile Delta. This alchemical/opiate connection occurs more than once in the Western tradition, as we shall see. The Greek word for opium is "Thebaicum", clearly derived from its theban origin. The use of the poppy was imported to Greece, probably before the Classical era, from Egypt. We know that opium was described by the great philosopher and naturalist, Theophrastes (371-287 B.C.). There is also important evidence that opium may have been used by the initiates of the Mysteries of Eleusis. In the story of Demeter's search for her lost daughter, Persephone, it is recounted that she stopped in Sicyon, the city of poppies (perhaps a memory of Thebes!). In the rich, fertile fields of Sicyon, she gathered a handful of the white and purple poppies, slit their unripe seed-cases and tasted the bitter, gummy juice with her tongue, thus discovering an elixir of rest and euphoria in the midst of her misery. The relief that the poppy offered to her in her anxious quest explains why Demeter is often represented with a poppy in her hand, rather than the usual sheaf of wheat. The poppy, through this legend, becomes the very symbol of earth, of sleep and of forgetfulness.

The collected and purified gum of the poppy may also have been used by the priests of Aesclepius in their sacred rituals of incubatory healing. During these overnight rites, patients were given concoctions, presumably containing opiates, and told to carefully note and record their dreams. The dream images

were considered to be sacred oracles, revealing the keys for the patient's healing to the priests, who were trained in the interpretation of the god's language. From Greece, the use and cultivation of the poppy spread to the Roman Empire, where the famous physician Galen inaugurated the use of an opium compound "mithradate" mixed with dogtooth violet, which was a standard cure for poisoning well into the Renaissance era. This compound was named after the legend of King Mithradates, who was supposed to have immured himself to poison after taking small daily doses of it. Virgil also mentions the use of opium as a soporific in the course of the *Aeneid*.

Even though we most naturally associate the use of the opiates with the far Orient, they were actually brought from the West to the East at a fairly late period. Arab merchants first brought the poppy from Egypt and Turkey to Persia, India and China, along the trade routes. The famous Arabic physician and naturalist Avicenna was himself said to have been an opium addict. The use of the poppy had far more than merely medicinal purposes in Arabic culture. Echoing Eliade's earlier quoted reference to the use of opium amongst Sufis, Peter Lamborn Wilson, in his book *Scandal: Essays in Islamic Heresy*, recounts the use of opium amongst contemporary Persian Mullas (Religious Teachers). In Iran (known in older eras as Persia), the traditional use of opium by artists, musicians, aristocrats, peasants and mystics alike is quite common and not at all a cause for alarm, according to Wilson. He also notes that some Sufis claim that opium use allows them to be free from the cares of worldly concerns, thus freeing them to concentrate more deeply upon profound spiritual matters. This sense of insulation from the world with a concomitant sense of philosophical depth and clarity was also noted by the 18th and 19th century European Romanticists, as we shall soon see. As also remarked upon in *Scandal*, it is quite likely that in the legend of Hassan-i-Sabbah, founder of the infamous Hashashin, or Assassins, he trained his saboteurs and "soldiers" with the use of a mixture of cannabis and opium. According to the legend, he took impressionable young lads, drugged them and had them led, blindfolded, to a hidden garden, where he revealed to them that if they followed his word to the death, that they would be rewarded with life in this "paradise" filled with luscious fruits and dancing girls. In this manner, he was supposed to have raised a veritable army of fanatically dedicated followers.

When the Crusaders began returning from the Holy Land, they re-introduced the habit of opium use to European culture, along with this powerful legend of the Assassins - a romantic image which was to remain in the back of the European collective consciousness for centuries, until



One of the great truths of opiate use is that there is an astonishingly wide range of individual reactions, both on the physical and on the mental planes. These can range from general euphoria, drowsiness and lassitude to stimulation, intense visionary ecstasies, blocked visionary abilities and agoraphobic isolation.



it burst out again to fuel the Romanticists and symbolists with dreams of the "decadent" Orient. Thus, the influence of Middle Eastern opium use reached straight into the incipient drug cultures of the 19th and 20th Centuries.

The use of opium in India was also an Arab influence, as noted by A.L. Basham in *The Wonder that was India*: "After Sus'ruta (4th Century A.D.) Indian medicine developed little except in the growing use of mercurial drugs and of others such as opium and sarsaparilla, which were introduced by the Arabs..." As we have already noted with Eliade's discussion of the shamanic roots of narcotic use in India, there is a strong relationship between opium and the concentrative and meditation states that lead to yogic *samadhi*. Patanjali, in the *Kaivalya Pada* section of the *Yoga Sutras* (Sutra #1), states that "The Siddhas (magical powers developed in the advanced practice of yoga) are the result of birth, drugs, mantras, austerities or *samadhi*." As I.K. Taimni, in his commentaries upon the *Yoga Sutras*, states: "Psychic powers of a low grade can be developed by the use of certain drugs. Many Fakirs in India use certain herbs like Ganja (derived from cannabis) for developing clairvoyance of a low order. Others can bring about very remarkable chemical changes by the use of certain drugs or herbs, but those who know these secrets do not generally impart them to others." Clearly, the use of opiates can induce states of detachment and calmness which can allow psychic abilities to come forth and they can also be used by advanced yogis and tantrics to focus more clearly than otherwise possible, yet as is always the case, the drugs cannot confer what is not already present as a latent ability. As suggested in Taimni's passage, there are also alchemical and transformative uses for the opiates which

are available to advanced spiritual practitioners. These alchemical practices undoubtedly involve deep manipulations of bodily metabolism and brain chemistry; secrets that also lie at the heart of Western Esoteric Alchemy.

The European use of opium for magical, alchemical and spiritual purposes thus dates back to the era of the Crusaders, the 12th and 13th Centuries. The poppy flower itself was used for magical purposes in rituals sacred to Venus... an interesting echo of its ancient connection to Demeter, linked in the famous phrase "Sine Cerere et Baccho est Venus Friget" (Without Bread and Wine, Love is cold). Ceres is the Roman form of the Greek Demeter in this saying. Seeds of the poppy plant were also burned as an oracle in the Middle Ages. If their smoke hovered over the brazier for too long, it was taken as an ill omen. In the early 16th Century, the great Swiss physician and alchemist, Paracelsus, achieved a tincture of opium and alcohol, which later became familiar as the laudanum so beloved of the 19th Century. This tincture of opium was widely used from the 16th through 19th Centuries, even for infants, since there was, until fairly late, no knowledge of its highly addictive nature.

The first glimmering of an awareness of the fact that the opiates are addictive only came in the year 1700, with the publishing of *The Mysteries of Opium Revealed*, by British physician John Jones. As an addict himself, Jones described both the useful and harmful effects of opium in highly inflated and fanciful terms, beginning a long tradition of misinformation concerning the drug. He did manage to provide, in this dubious account, the first fairly accurate description of the withdrawal syndrome. This is caused when opiates oxidize in the bloodstream. As they oxidize, they become poisonous and the body attempts to remove these toxins, causing diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, severe chills and aches in the joints, overall pains of a terrible severity and a particularly distinctive odor in profuse sweat. Since the opiates can also tend to actually replace the body's natural endorphins, or painkillers, the victim is left without even the usual small cushion of relief afforded to other sufferers. Withdrawal symptoms are felt, because of this, with a particularly savage ferocity.

One of the great truths of opiate use is that there is an astonishingly wide range of individual reactions, both on the physical and on the mental planes. These can range from general euphoria, drowsiness and lassitude to stimulation, intense visionary ecstasies, blocked visionary abilities and agoraphobic isolation. In some cases the true effects of the drug are only discernible upon stoppage of the dosage. As a strong endorphin interactant, opium can also enhance the body's natural brain chemistry as well as blocking or replacing

various neurochemicals, depending upon individual dose, metabolism and internal chemistry. Paracelsus believed in the alchemical powers of his tincture of opium so strongly that he referred to it as the "Stone of Immortality". Since the general effect of the opiates is to induce a calm, focused sense of concentration removed from the blaring stimuli of the outside world, the practitioner is then free to enter a variety of possible internal states, including visionary awareness, clairvoyance, poetic reverie or philosophical speculation. Mastery of dosage and timing is the key here, since even slight overindulgence can produce such lassitude that communication of one's insights becomes very difficult.

One of the best metaphors for the effects of the opiates is that of earthen gravity. Aleister Crowley, in his novel *Moonchild*, describes the ritually fattened priestess of the Moon, Lisa, in terms of the heroin addict. Her huge body makes her bound to the earth much as the French say, the body of the heroin addict clings to the earth (*Clové à Terre*) in a state of gravitic immobility. In truth, there are subtle and striking parallels between the states of obesity and opiate addiction, both from the psychological and the physiological perspective, a fact noted by Thomas Szasz in his *Ceremonial Chemistry*. Both states involve physical lassitude, highly enhanced endorphin activity and a sense of sinking within oneself, with a concomitant cutting off of worldly awareness. Symbolically, the potentially obesity-causing sheaf of wheat and the addiction-causing poppy, both held by Demeter, seem to have similar effects upon those who abuse them... a mutual sense of clinging to the bosom of earth, out of which they sprang. It is interesting that the dreamy lassitude due to overindulgence in both food and opiates may have been exploited during the Neolithic era for organized oracular cults. The evidence of what may have been ritually fattened priestesses in the megalithic sites on the island of Malta (See Jean McMann, *Riddles of the Stone Age*) may indicate an early understanding of opiate/endorphin brain chemistry upon an intuitive level. The constant sleep of these constantly overfed priestesses would match the sleep of the poppy in many ways... the oracular use of both is quite likely in early civilization.

The oracular propensity of the opiates being clearly established, their initiatic role is also quite evident. In the process of having all of one's usual exterior stimuli blocked out, one is gradually confronted with the deepest and darkest fears and anxieties that fill the subconscious mind... an effect not unlike that found in modern isolation tank research. The opiates seem to follow the platonic dictum to "know thyself" with a particular vengeance. The inevitable withdrawal experience does very little

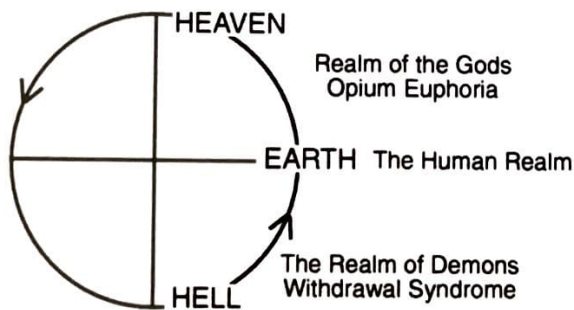


The initiatic role of the opiates is quite evident. They seem to follow the platonic dictum to "know thyself" with a particular vengeance. The inevitable withdrawal experience does very little else than confront oneself with all of the terrors of the personal "dweller upon the threshold."



else than confront oneself with all of the terrors of the personal "dweller upon the threshold." One of the effects of opium is to slow down the rate of heartbeat. During, the withdrawal and detoxification phase of the cycle, the heart suddenly speeds up, inducing terrible panic attacks, nameless mortal terrors and fierce anxieties. It is not uncommon for those on high dosages to come very close to death upon sudden withdrawal, if not to actually pass over the line between worlds entirely.

In the ritualistic sense, it is clear that a small isolated dose of opiate, administered during the initiatic ceremony of a Mystery Religion, would have the effect of inducing a suggestible and dreamy openness followed by a brief sense of withdrawal anxiety, this would be a very powerful teaching tool... witness Hassan i Sabbah and his Hashashin. There are few other tools which could reach as powerfully into the heart and mind of the candidate, save powerful psychedelics. Since the opiates are, symbolically, concentrated essences of the Earth's spirit, they seem to perfectly mimic the cycles of the wheel of life:



Since all phases of human existence are covered during the opiate cycle, we can say that they simulate the entire wheel of existence in a deeply codified form. The

addictive trap natural to extended opium use (it is possible to form an addiction with even fairly low doses if the period of time they are used is over a certain threshold) also mimics the entrapment of the soul into flesh recognized by the Gnostics as the essential fall of mankind. Since it is not at all difficult to overdose and, as we have seen, sudden withdrawal from a high dosage can also bring on death, this is a path which teaches one the true nature of being from the point of view of the knife's edge. The answer, then, to the question of whether or not opium use can constitute a valid spiritual path is "yes." Certain Sufis mentioned in *Scandal* refer to Hashashin as the "Master" in this same sense, since it takes the initiate on the course of being, around the wheel of life. It is difficult, of course to imagine anyone foolish enough to pick this path without extremely compelling spiritual reasons, particularly in a culture hostile to its use.

Returning to our historical examination of the poppy, the great hostility to opiates in the West dates back to an origin point in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries. This was the era of the incipient Industrial Revolution and it is precisely because machine-operated factories required workers able to be alert for long hours, sociable and customer-oriented, that the opiates began to slowly, but surely, fall out of favor, whilst stimulants, such as coffee, tobacco and even the amphetamines took on more and more positive social roles. It is important to remember that according to Phyllis Deane's *The First Industrial Revolution*, the era from 1750 to 1850, just prior to the full-scale Industrial Revolution as we now conceive of it, was a period of shifting technical, economic and social patterns, preparing for the great revolution, *per se*. It is this period of rapid and fundamental social change and shifts in the traditional workplace which first, and not coincidentally, witnesses the gradual public "fall" of the opiates, once considered virtual panaceas.

Interestingly, there is some evidence for the fairly open use of opiates for magical purposes of induction into oracular dreams, during the late 18th Century. Karl von Eckartshausen's *Magic: The Principles of Higher Knowledge*, which details a system of magical epistemology, some what incongruously contains a section, replete with recipes, for using opiate and narcotic incense for the invocation of magical states of mind. Eckartshausen was a famous Illuminist and the author of the classic *Cloud Upon the Sanctuary*. During this part of the latter 19th Century, the use of Laudanum for medicinal purposes was leveling off on the Continent whilst its use among all levels of British society was increasing intensively and on a wide geographical/demographic scale, largely

for medicinal uses, but with a growing sense of the sheer pleasure of its use. During this very same period of incipient mechanization, whilst actual opium use was increasing and negative attitudes toward it were beginning to gel, the early Romanticist movement in writing, poetry and the visual arts, was reacting toward all of these developments in a complex manner. The essential thrust of Romanticism was a desire to escape the tawdriness, mundanity and over-rationalization of industrialized life, in favor of an existence lived in the sense of the sublime - of soul-stirring wonders and poetic subtleties.

There is actually a traditionalistic and conservative thrust to the Romantics, particularly in their fascination with folktales and fairy stories, that looks away from the coming Machine Age; back, toward an old-fashioned culture where "soul" is the central fact of life. Far from being forward-looking "Avant-Garde" visionaries, virtually every major movement in the "Bohemian" line: the Romantics, Nazarenes, Pre-Raphaelites, Symbolists, Decadents, Dadaists, Simplist, Surrealists, Beats, Hippies and even Punks, have all sought a vision of life consistently pre-mechanized, inward-looking and influenced strongly by "primitive" or folkloric models. Even the possible exceptions; the machine-fascinated Futurists, the British Mods and the new technophile "Ravers", have all tended to seek out instinctively tribal social structures. In a perverse way, these groups represent a strongly conservative tendency in the 19th and 20th Centuries, in the sense that they hope to save something of the soul, of the individual, of the uniquely human work of art, versus the mechanized, cheap and blaring world "outside" the tribe. Is it any wonder then, given such an introverted social structure, that the opiate would be a primary drug of choice for many of these groups? Virtually every "youth" movement since the 1780's has been instinctively drawn to opium, heroin or morphine as a way to block out the agony of the outside world and to favor the quiet inner contemplation necessary to individual self-expression. Of course, very few of these movements or even the individuals comprising them, had any of the necessary spiritual keys to the proper use of these drugs.

It is virtually impossible to enumerate all of the major figures involved with the opiates in the course of the last 200 years of visionary art and occultism, yet it is still important to catalogue at least some of the pivotal figures, in order to understand our present situation as well as some key insights into the altered states of awareness common to opium use.

Of course, Thomas de Quincey (1785-1859) stands out as the first writer to systematically study the effect of opium upon dreams and visions. His 1821 book, *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, virtually redefined the Western attitude toward opium and still has its partisans to this day. In it, de Quincey concluded that opium reveries could, in fact, be the basis for art, if not a form of art themselves, and that they did act as intimations of higher

realities. His nearly unbridled, almost worshipful, attitude toward opium brought many who might otherwise have never tried the drug to become addicts, through rash experimentation. De Quincey's spiritual and aesthetic opinion mirrored that of virtually every other culture upon opium - that the drug itself can never confer greatness. In the right circumstances, it can enhance creativity and spiritual contemplation, but at the cost of terrible suffering. De Quincey did describe the terrors of addiction and withdrawal, however, he de-emphasized them in comparison to his enthusiastic embracing of the opium reverie as a way to art. He understood the dangers of the drug, yet emphasized the more pleasant early stages of addiction versus the mental deterioration of the later stages. During the course of his self-examination under the influence of opium, De Quincey evolved an advanced theory of metaphysics, which centered on the concept of what he called "involutes." He noticed that apparently unconnected phenomena tended to cluster together during opium reverie, forming these "involutes" which revealed hidden affinities upon higher planes of reality. This theory, which is somewhat reminiscent of Boehme's doctrine of "signatures," also looks forward to Jung's concept of "Constellations" of archetypes, which reveal deeper meanings in the psyche. De Quincey's overall influence added to the general misapprehension of the opiates begun by Dr. John Jones' book of 1700 (see above), yet it also provided a distinctly metaphysical and philosophical interest in opium states upon which almost every other addicted writer has felt obliged to expand upon, thus creating an interesting tradition of metaphysics and epistemology in its own right, from its own unique perspective.

Edgar Allen Poe, Baudelaire, Crabbe and Keats all represented varying aspects of opium use within the Romanticist stream, yet it is Coleridge who revealed the most personal and perhaps illuminating approach to the drug. After occasional medicinal use during childhood, he, like so many others in 19th Century Britain, gradually drifted into a very heavy and terrible addiction, for the rest of his life. At various times, as is typical, he made futile attempts to detoxify himself and to break the addiction. Unlike most of his romantic contemporaries, Coleridge did not believe dreams represent a higher reality. His elaborate and fascinating theory of dreams distinguished between true dream states, nightmares, borderland states between sleep and wakefulness, hallucinations, *deja-vu* experiences and reveries. Surprisingly, even though he had such a psychological fascination and he was a life-long user of opium, the drug and his opium reveries had very little direct influence upon the overall body of his work, save the famous case of *Kubla Khan*. It is important to note that *Kubla Khan* was composed, not coincidentally, during the early, euphoric stage of a bout of addiction. Coleridge's theory of dreams did not go on to influence later schools of scientific psychology, yet

it did have some influence upon the writers and artists who followed. Along with his interest in dreams, Coleridge also evinced a fascination with the mechanisms of perception, which reveals some of the inner secrets of the opium reverie. As Althea Hayter notes in *Opium and the Romantic Imagination*, Coleridge's fascination with reverie and perception focused upon flames: "More fascinating still were the ocular spectra which luminous objects left on his retina after he had been gazing at them - purple flashes, green lightnings, crystals of orange, violet and green that turned into moss, white phosphorescent fringes and lines, angular purple steams streaked with the colours of flesh." This hyperaesthesia is one of the more common effects of opium use, which Hayter believes may be one of the important triggers for deeper states of reverie. She quotes the draft of a poem by Coleridge, which reveals how he used the opium state to trigger chains of association:

"The poet's eye in his tipsy hour
Hath a magnifying power
Or rather the soul emancipates his
eyes

Of the accidents of size
In unctuous cones of kindling coal
Or smoke from his pipe's bole
His eye can see
Phantoms of Sublimity"

Coleridge sums up, in this following brief passage, the entire opium cycle, from blissful calm to deep reverie to a state of anxiety, as the dose wears off:

"Deep self-possession, an intense repose,

No other than as Eastern Sages feign
The God, who float upon a Lotos leaf,
Dreams for a thousand ages; then
awaking,

Creates a world, and smiling at the
bubble,

Relapses into bliss. Ah! was that bliss
Fear'd as an alien, and too vast for
man?"

Coleridge often compared his opium state to that of the Indian god Vishnu (actually Brahma) who slept for millions of years, having created the world with a burst of godly power and then forgot his own creation entirely. In this metaphor, Coleridge sums up the god-like sense of promise opened up by the opiates, but also the terrible exhaustion which makes it so difficult for addicted artists to ever actually produce their art.

Francis Thompson (1860-1907) as a Late Romanticist, is perhaps the greatest example of this syndrome. As poet and author, writer of the famous Christian classic, *The Hound of Heaven*, Thompson suffered from tuberculosis and used opium throughout his life to ease the pain. His periods of creativity and production occurred almost exclusively during his periods of abstinence, when, as if waking from a dream, he felt a rush of intellectual activity bursting from within, along with insomnia, freedom from inertia and a state of hyper-sensitivity of the nerves - a state of terrible and acute discomfort, but one conducive to the act of writing as a virtual palliative. Thompson also reveals the intense hyperaesthesia of the addict. He noted the loud pulse of his own heart, the

ticking of the clock, the clang of the cathedral bells, suggesting doom, the secret messages in a single leaf in a hedge ... all indicative of the natural tendency of the addict to seek metaphysical meaning in the most minute stimuli. Thompson also the strong sense of time speeding up to the addict (Ibid) "Decades and Centuries seem to pass in a few moments ..." Hayter notes that Thompson saw time as a "giant building through which he was being whirled, so that the years flicked overhead like the arches of a tunnel... or the hours flashed by like pillars in some endless colonnade, which run together in a blur as they are passed and left behind by the traveling eye" It is unfortunate that Thompson's keen insights were not expressed as voluminously as they might have been, since the few periods when he was able to write, he was forced to write book reviews and mundane articles, in order to support his habit.

In this generation following that of the great Romantics, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, active from the 1840's to the 1860's, carried on many of the Romanticist concepts, along with a deep and abiding interest in escaping to the world of the High Middle Ages. Dante Gabriel Rossetti was the greatest poet and painter of this movement. He was also a habitual user of Laudanum, although it appears to have had little, if any, direct effect upon his work. From the Pre-Raphaelites to the Symbolists of the 1870's, the figure of Gerard Nerval stands out as one of great mystical writers of the era and an important influence upon the later Decadent and Surrealist movements. In his case, a naturally disordered mind was mixed with habitual opium use, to provide the makings of a truly bizarre, yet fascinating, personality. In famous anecdote his friends discovered him walking his pet lobster on a long blue satin ribbon in the Tuilleries Gardens. To their surprise, he responded that "At least lobsters don't bark!" His *Journey to the Orient* is a highly important document for esotericists, since it contains a much fuller version of the Hiramic/Masonic than that with which we are familiar in the West.

Already, by the 1850's and 1860's, we begin to witness shifts in the European attitude toward opium. As Philippe Jullian in his *Dreamers of Decadence* describes, "The Decadents (of the 1870's and 1880's) drank absinthe, the so-called "Green Fairy." The 1830 generation, on the other hand, preferred punch. A little later, opium had its adepts, often in the form of Laudanum, as with Nerval and Rossetti. Other drugs appeared on the scene about 1880 ... for a time, morphine was in fashion and then ether, which could produce madness fairly quickly, but more often than not, Absinthe was regarded as sufficient." It was this generation of the 1880's, which directly paved the way for the magicians and artists of the 20th Century. Foremost among those who span the bridge between the Decadents and the Modernists, Aleister Crowley stands apart as the high priest of opiates. His famous *Diary of a Drug Fiend* detailed, in 1920's terms, a hellish descent into addiction, as well as the somewhat dubious possibility

of spiritual regeneration through his system of Magick. He himself was a lifelong addict. As was very much the case with De Quincey, this thinly veiled autobiographical novel brought many hapless would-be magicians into addictive states. Crowley's sense of realism merged with the very same romantic attitudes toward opium that derive all the way back to De Quincey.

One of the most significant, yet least-known esoteric and artistic uses of heroin in this Century occurred during the 1920's with a group of French poets, writers and artists, originally known as the Simplists and later known simply as *Le Grand Jeu* (The Great Game). Begun by Rene Daumal and Roger Gilbert Lecomte, they later included artists Maurice Henry and Joseph Sima, along with writers Roger Vaillant and Robert Meyrat. Their attempt to create a new experimental metaphysics in poetry and art was an impressive yet short-lived landmark of the Western Spirit. Lecomte eventually succumbed to an overdose and Daumal went on to abandon heroin and to study with Gurdjieff. His famous metaphysical works, *Mount Analogue* and *A Night of Serious Drinking* are brief but profound statements of the kind of purely intuitive metaphysical approach favored by *Le Grand Jeu*. Daumal's short essay *A Fundamental Experiment*, is a terrifying account of his self-dosage with carbon tetrachloride and subsequent voyage to the near-death state. It is perhaps the purest expression of *Le Grand Jeu*.

The Surrealists toyed briefly with the idea of an alliance with *Le Grand Jeu*, however, political differences scotched that fertile potential. Yves Tanguy remains the most famous and one of the most tragic heroin-addicted surrealists. He died of an overdose in 1955 after having created some of the most truly enigmatic and powerful visual statements in the Surrealist lexicons. His final paintings are noted for their apocalyptic sense of impending doom. In general, though, the link between Surrealism and drugs was not terribly strong; certainly not as all-pervasive as amongst the late 19th Century Symbolists and Decadents, who were their forebears.

It remained for the generation following the Surrealists to re-affirm the old traditional opiate-creativity connection dating back to the Romantics. Amongst the Beat writers and poets, William S. Burroughs stands out as the greatest exponent of heroin as a creative tool, although in later life, he attempted to kick heroin and became more interested techniques such as the "Cut-Up" and the "Dream Machine" to stimulate creativity. His early novel, *Junkie* is a grindingly realistic portrayal of the life of the modern addict, so far removed from the infinitely more innocent world of De Quincey and the 18th Century. Burroughs also continues the long metaphysical and philosophical tradition of opium reverie speculations. This side of his work has, of late, taken on an Egyptian cast, in such novels as *The Western Lands*, *The Place of Dead Roads* and *Cities of the Red Night*. Burroughs sums up perhaps better than anyone else, the extreme difficulty that

our culture has developed, with regard to the opiates and the underlying states of consciousness that they create. The only possible metaphor to use concerning this difficulty is war, for that is how it is now conceived in terms of political rhetoric.

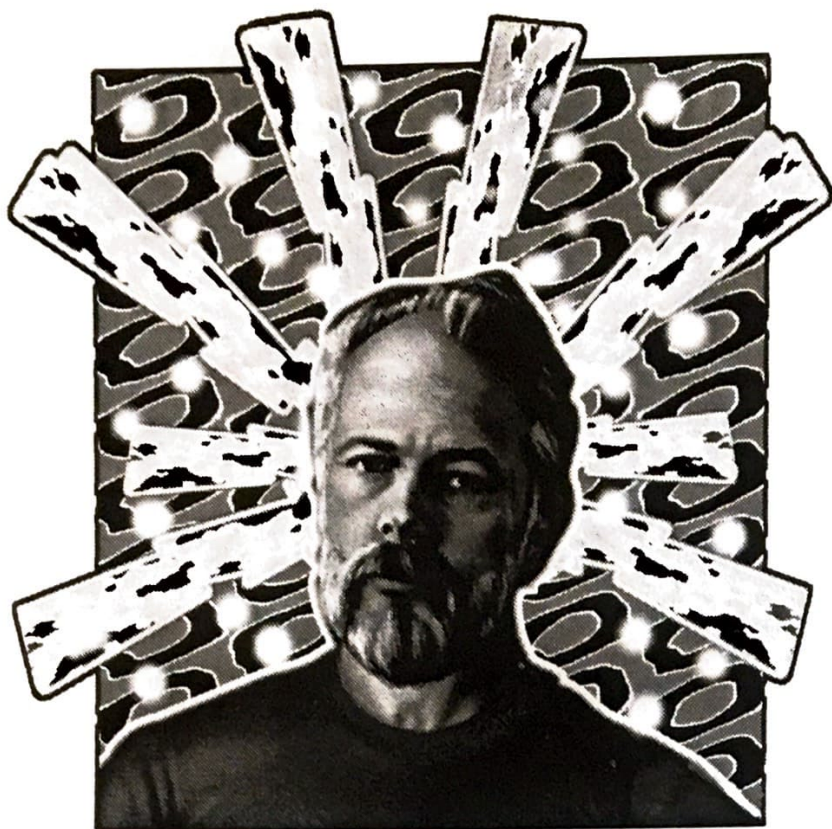
The current age of isolation tanks and smart drugs, computers, virtual reality and techno-beat might seem inimical to the way of the poppy with its earthbound memories of Demeter and her lost daughter, yet the slower and gentler ways of old, with their roots reaching back to the shamans, will always have their devotees and despite the risks and dangers, the poppy will always have its adepts, for there is no other path like it in this world.

Special thanks to Peter Lamborn Wilson for a very informative chat on opium use among the Sufis, and special thanks to Alethea Hayter's *Opium and the Romantic Imagination*, which formed the backbone of our research... it is still the standard work upon heroin and creativity and is worth its weight in gold!

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PHILIP K. DICK: THE OTHER SIDE

— by Paul Rydeen

"... the group had taken an active interest in their situation, viewing it as a manifestation on an earthly plane of certain super-terrestrial forces."
— Jack Isidore¹

My first exposure to the mind-bending fiction of Philip K. Dick was in early 1981. It must have been January or February because I remember it still being quite cold. To my surprise, a friend of my dad's had given him a recent issue of *Playboy*, which I eagerly perused whenever I had the chance. On one such occasion I needed to prove to myself a maturity beyond the pictures of naked ladies, so I commenced to read the magazine's various features. It turned out to be the December 1980 issue; one feature was Phil's story "Frozen Journey"². Although this high-school senior had been reading science fiction for a decade or more, I must confess I was confused by the shifting realities portrayed in "Frozen Journey". Further readings did little for my comprehension.

By the time graduation rolled around, I had seen Phil's books recommended repeatedly in the columns of *Heavy Metal* magazine. I picked up a used copy of *The Man in the High Castle*³. It was quite good, and a whole lot easier to understand than "Frozen Journey" had been. Soon after, *VALIS*⁴ hit the stands, I bought it. I enjoyed it immensely, but was still unable to fully realize the implications of Phil's speculations. Next I found the Gregg Press hardcover reissue of *Time Out of Joint*⁵ in a little science fiction bookstore that had just opened off-campus. At last I understood; what I had read of the false or illusory nature of reality while studying Hinduism and Buddhism now made sense on a personal level. As I matured, my appreciation for Phil grew. I started college that fall, and frequented that bookstore often. I scoured almost every used bookstore in the Minneapolis area, spending months in search of elusive PKD titles. I found many rare first editions this way, and still have dreams wherein I continue the search. When Phil died in March of 1982, I owned a copy of nearly every book he had written. I considered his death a personal loss.

To understand Phil, one must grapple with his unique emotional states, and his unique interpretations of same. Most importantly, in February and March of 1974 Phil had a series of "mystic" experiences. When he died eight

years later he was still unsure of their origin or meaning. Left behind was his so-called Exegesis, an 8,000-page, one-million-word continuing dialogue with himself written late, late at night. Though Phil never did solve the puzzle to his satisfaction, I believe he enjoyed the pursuit of the answer for its own sake much more than he would have enjoyed resolving the problem. In fact, I don't think any answer would've been entirely acceptable to him for very long. By its very nature this mystery had no rational solution.

Phil had suffered several personal setbacks during the time immediately preceding these experiences. Stress over his wife and new son, a severe case of writer's block, an unexplained break-in, lingering problems with drugs (mostly prescribed medications), and worries over his political actions all played their part. So did the loss of several close friends. He even worried over whether he had inadvertently published high-level government secrets in his novels (see KING FELIX discussion below). The usually self-reflective Phil became much more introspective than normal. His depression turned his thoughts to suicide more than once. The impetus for this particular experience was the severe pain Phil was suffering as a result of having an impacted wisdom tooth removed. Phil called his oral surgeon, who promptly phoned in a prescription for some codeine to a local pharmacy (or Darvon; accounts vary).

When the delivery girl arrived, Phil took one look at her and became mesmerized by the golden fish dangling between her breasts. When asked, the girl told Phil that this was the primitive Christian ICHTHYS symbol, ICHTHYS being the Greek for "fish". The fish was chosen in part because ICHTHYS was taken to be an anagram for "Iesous CHristos, THEou Yios, Soter" (Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior). *The girl and I are secret Christians, in hiding because of the Roman persecution. The only way we can identify ourselves to each other is the innocent-looking fish symbol, a harmless pendant in the eyes of most. This secret ally brings not only medicine to heal my sore tooth, but spiritual medicine as well. After all, is not Christ the Great Physician? He accepted the package and bade the girl good-bye. Phil found himself transported back to first-century Rome - the time of the founding of the Church amidst much persecution. The vision of another reality superimposed upon this one lasted weeks. Phil had a hard time deciding which one was true, and which the illusion. During this period of uncertainty, he found himself "trapped" (figuratively, I would imagine) in a Black Iron Prison - a Gnostic symbol of our fall into History. It is deceptively referred to as the Cave of Treasures. Phil used this concept obliquely in "Strange Memories of Death"⁷, wherein he refers to his apartment complex as having been prison-like until the new developers made it appear like a garden. From his further description it is quite obviously still a prison, despite its Edenic appearance.*

In Freudian terms, the tooth can be a symbol of libido (not necessarily sexual). Dreaming of the loss of a tooth, for example, can represent a fear that one may lose one's standing in some way - physically or emotionally - or be a warning from

the subconscious that this is threatening to happen. Note that one of Palmer Eldritch's three stigmata was his artificial teeth⁸. Phil's impacted wisdom tooth was like his latent Gnosis, awaiting the proper stimulus to trigger his *anamnesis*. Another symbol of the libido is the phalliform fish, whose sleek shape glides silently through the deep waters of the subconscious. As ICHTHYS, Christ strengthens our libido, our "psychic" energy, and asks nothing in return. He is UBIK, a negentropic force in a universe that is forever running itself down⁹.

The Hebrew for "tooth" is *shin*, which is also the name of the twenty-first and penultimate letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (The reader familiar with Phil's novel *The Penultimate Truth*¹⁰ may do well to ponder the connection.) The English equivalent to *shin* is "S" or "Sh". Perhaps because of its trident shape (literally, "three-toothed") and sibilant pronunciation, the kabbalists associated this letter with the element fire. Compare Phil's trident dream at the end of *VALIS*, after Fat departs again for the Greek islands. *Shin* also appears somewhat like a descending dove, so it should come as no surprise that a relationship between it and the Holy Spirit exists. That the numerical value of both the letter taken by itself and the Hebrew phrase RUACH ALHIM ("the Spirit of God", usually translated "Elohim") is 300 serves to solidify the connection. The Spirit is often represented as a flame, one example being the tongues of fire that came to rest on the apostles' heads on that first Pentecost. Many spirits and other air elementals have been associated with fire as well.

Later Christian kabbalists (namely, Pico) and the Theosophists attempted to justify their doctrines by showing that the union of God as Yahweh/Jehovah (YHWH) and the Holy Spirit

(Sh) was Jesus (YHShWH). The four letters of the ineffable name represent the four natural elements of the ancients,

while the fifth element - spirit - fills out the fifth point of the pentagram, a symbol of man. The triple-pronged *shin* was taken to be representative of the Trinity. YHShHW is usually translated "Yeheshuah", of which the English form is "Joshua". "Jesus" is from IESOUS, the Greek version of this name. This formula seems especially valid if one considers the esoteric doctrine of the Holy Spirit as the feminine counterpart of God. Certain kabbalists have maintained the Hebrew RUACH is of the feminine gender; if so then this has been translated out of most versions of the Bible. In some Gnostic systems, the consort of God is Sophia, Phil's Holy Wisdom (see the biblical Book of Proverbs).

The Babylon whom St. John of Patmos tells us is "fallen, fallen" is usually identified with first-century Rome¹¹. The Hebrews' subjugation under the Romans was every bit as resented as it had been under the Babylonians six centuries earlier. John's prophecy of Rome's fall was certainly wishful thinking, penned sometime after the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD. I identify John's Babylon with the Gnostic Sophia, a symbol of the world in its fallen state. The Land of the Dead - Egypt - was a similar symbol for later Gnostic sects. The implication of Phil's vision is that we still live in Roman times, i.e. a "fallen" state. Gnosis must come from the outside. *Chokmah* is the Hebrew for "wisdom"; her position on the kabbalistic Tree of Life is the second or penultimate one (representing a less than perfect reality) - but here she is given a masculine identity, despite the references to Holy Wisdom in the Scriptures. The Greek for "wisdom" is Sophia; a cognate term is Gnosis, "knowledge". Like Sophia, *Chokmah* is one step removed from the true Godhead. I equate Sophia with John's Babylon and the traditional *Chokmah*, the

same *yin* principle which Phil took to be his anima in the form of his long-dead twin sister Jane (she had died aged five weeks). Her avatar has appeared previously in the form of Simon Magus' Helen, to cite a Gnostic example. In Phil's case, he sought her in each woman with whom he had an adult relationship - a reunion of the divine syzygy, as it were. His yearning for the sister he never knew did more to inspire his world-view than any other single factor; the appearance of twins throughout his work is ample testimony to this state of affairs. The encysted twin in *Dr. Bloodmoney*¹² is one of many such examples.

There is a kabbalistic tradition in which one sees oneself relating events from the future. The kabbalists' reticence to record autobiographical experiences, especially those of an ecstatic nature, has obscured this fact. Phil had a hypnogogic experience as a boy in which he saw himself as an adult standing at the foot of his bed. In later life he relived the experience from the "time traveler's" standpoint. The Persian Mani (founder of the gnostic Manichean religion) had the same thing occur to him when he was 12, and once more as an adult. He recognized this doppelganger as his Higher Self - the Divine Adam and called it in Arabic "al-Tawm", the twin. It guided him and gave him comfort throughout his life, and he was said to be gazing upon it in the cell just before he died. Despite Phil's Valentinian Sophian cosmology, I have often felt he was more akin to the Manichean school on a practical level.

In 1975 a two-word cypher was "sent forth"; the phrase KING FELIX appears in the juxtaposition of two adjacent lines in Phil's novel *Flow My Tears, The Policeman Said*¹³. It was only later that he happened upon its significance. The fact that Army Intelligence bought multiple copies of that one book perplexed him greatly. In *VALIS* one of the Lamptons tells him that the phrase has kabbalistic significance. I assume they refer to *gematria*, the practice of assigning numerical

values to individual letters within a word and taking their sum. "King" is English, so should it be translated into Latin? "Felix" is the Latin for "happy" (literally, "fruitful"). "Rex" is the Latin for "king" so FELIX REX adds to 256 when transposed into Greek enumeration. This is the eighth power of two, which perhaps is the Gnostic *ogdoad* pointing back to a duality - Phil's Two-Source Cosmogony. "Basileos" is Greek for "king"; I'm not sure what the proper translation of "felix" would be, or even if Greek is the proper language to use. This practice existed in the Hebrew language before Greek became the common language of the Mediterranean area, and in other Semitic languages before that. The little girl, Sophia, reads from the *Sephir Yetzirah* when the Rhipidon Society visits her at the Lamptons' - establishing a Hebrew link - but she also tells them the Lamptons are insane. This issue remains unresolved.

At one point Phil experimented with a megadose of vitamins he had read about in *Psychology Today*. This mixture was being used by a certain doctor to stimulate simultaneous neural firing in both hemispheres of the brain. While the original experiments were strictly designed for split-personality patients, Phil concocted a batch and swallowed it down. He says it worked. The right side of the brain is often identified with the dark, irrational, "feminine" component of our minds; the parallel to the imperfect, premature Sophia is obvious. Speculation has arisen that the voices heard by prophets and madmen originate in the right-brain¹⁴. Usually drowned out by the day-to-day noise of the more verbally active left-brain, under certain circumstances it may be heard. At one time in our not-so-distant past, this may have been far more common than it is today. This

Crash Collusion 21

is one of many possibilities considered by Phil, probably no more right or wrong than any of the others.

Another possibility I'd like to briefly consider is that one possible subconscious influence was the "Roman" episode of the old *Star Trek* TV series. I've long forgotten the show's title, but it involved a planet similar to twentieth-century Earth with the exception that Roman rule still existed. Rome never fell - the Empire never ended - and secret followers of "the Son" were preaching peace and brotherhood rather than tyranny. This in no way lessens the import of Phil's vision, nor does it explain anything away. I merely find it an intriguing idea to ponder. Who can say what psychic debris forms the foundations of our subconscious?

As the image of first-century Rome persisted, Phil began seeing St. Elmo's fire almost everywhere he looked. He had purchased his own ICHTHYS sign to hang in the picture window of his apartment; admittedly his staring at the sunlight had much to do with the earliest manifestations. However, the pink light was even visible at night, when Phil would sit up in bed unable to sleep, enjoying the show. In *A Scanner Darkly*¹⁵ he describes it as a rapid-fire succession of Paul Klee, Kandinsky and other modern artists. He also describes the times the St. Elmo's fire took on the shape of a doorway proportioned to the Golden Mean (representing perfection). This was a doorway to the Other World. The character in the book regrets having never thought to step through the doorway after the apparition finally disappeared. The nightly visions continued, often taking the form of incredibly complex dreams which Phil saw at once were unlike his usual sleeping habits. He called them "tutelary" dreams because of their information-rich content. In many he was actually shown texts, which he was able to read and transcribe their contents upon awakening. This is another kabbalistic tradition, the ability to read holy texts on the astral plane. Always for Phil, the pink beam of light was prominent.

Admittedly, the idea one is being shot with a beam of energy is typical to many schizophrenics. So are the discarnate voices which haunted Phil's unplugged radio at night, telling him how terrible a person he was (his then-wife Tessa heard them too). The one difference here is that Phil perceived it as a healing light rather than a further descent into madness. He credited it with taking charge of his life, recovering a lot of income due from unpaid book royalties, and even re-margining his typewriter. He never decided what the beam's source really was. Guesses included the Rosicrucian Society, Soviet scientists experimenting with "psychotronics", and an alien satellite orbiting a distant star. One message came from the "Portuguese States of America", leading Phil to contemplate the possibility of parallel universes. He also thought it might have been God. The Roman Sybil in her later Christianized form was a particular favorite of Phil's; her similarity to Jane as Phil's "protectress" was the attraction. *VALIS* even quotes the Sybilline Oracles. Note also that the much-sought product *UBIK* in Phil's novel of the same name is depicted on the dustjacket of the original as spraying a pink substance. Coincidence? The connection is further made in *VALIS* when Phil and friends mistake a model of the satellite for a can lying in the gutter (in the movie-within-a-book). Does this refer to a can of *UBIK* as well?

In some of his dreams, Phil saw Soviet scientists rushing around behind the scenes to keep the alien satellite functioning.

Phil found himself transported back to first-century Rome - the time of the founding of the Church amidst much persecution. The vision of another reality superimposed upon this one lasted weeks. Phil had a hard time deciding which one was true, and which was the illusion.

Phil originally thought *VALIS* was from Fomalhaut, which he called "Albemuth" (from the Arab *Al Behemoth*, "the whale"). Fomalhaut is the fish's mouth; Phil apparently mistook "behemoth" for "leviathan", two Hebrew words from the Old Testament. It is the latter which actually refers to the whale, according to most sources. What matters most is Phil's beliefs on the matter; if his subconscious mind processed "behemoth" as "whale", then "whale" it is - for him. At any rate, the fish symbolism is obvious, as is the reference to Jonah. Phil must have read Robert K.G. Temple's *The Sirius Mystery*¹⁶ before writing *VALIS*, because he relocated the satellite to there. This brings in a host of occult references too involved to go into here. Suffice it to say that the dark companion of Sirius represents "occult" or hidden knowledge, as does Sirius' position as "the sun behind the Sun" (as Kenneth Grant calls it). Neither Phil nor Temple seem to have known this when they wrote their books. Phil cleverly tied in the dualist Dogon philosophy described by

Temple with his own Gnostic beliefs, though as narrator of *VALIS* he ascribes this revelation to Fat and tells us this is the point at which Fat's madness became complete. Madness or not, *VALIS* stands as a classic on many levels. The three-eyed aliens had pincers like a crab where hands should be, just like Palmer Eldritch and his artificial hands. These "improved" hands seem to denote an elevated status as cosmic artificer or demiurge, while also indicating an inherent flaw of some sort.

The beings were also deaf and mute; they communicated amongst themselves by means of telepathy. One could say their inability to hear or speak reinforces the notion of an imperfect demiurge, as well as it helps conceal his true nature. Then again, their physical handicap may be the results of a personal sacrifice undertaken to enhance their mental faculties.

Phil was consistent in documenting his major influences within the works they influenced. *VALIS* was no exception. Curiously, there are two which went uncredited, and to my knowledge no researcher has yet uncovered them both. The first is Robert K.G. Temple's aforementioned *The Sirius Mystery*. Temple documents the Dogon people of Africa and their precise astronomical data which predate telescopes. Their legends say that this knowledge was given to them by three-eyed crab-clawed beings from Sirius. Temple goes on to trace the Dogon's ancestors back to migrating Egyptians who continue a tradition well-documented in the Mysteries of Isis and Osiris. Certainly Phil read Temple's book after writing *Radio Free Albemuth*; why else would he have moved *VALIS* from Fomalhaut to Sirius?

The other major influence which went uncredited may be more of a surprise. It is not a scholarly influence like Temple's, but rather a little known facet of popular culture. The whole idea of an immortal and all-powerful race who build universes out of boredom, fall into them and become trapped because they forget who they are is indeed gnostic in flavor, as many have said. It should be noted, however, that this is exactly what Scientology teaches about the Thetans. **WE ARE THE THETANS** and we don't even know it.

Palmer Eldritch had three stigmata: his artificial eyes, artificial teeth and artificial hands. The cover of the original edition combines these to show the classic eye-in-palm design used by fortune-tellers to indicate occult wisdom. The all-seeing eye is a common motif in Masonic lore as well; at one point Phil challenged God to show himself and saw the Ark of the Covenant opened to

reveal the eye-in-the-triangle. Esoteric tradition among the Masons identifies this occult eye with the star Sirius - named for Osiris, the dead and risen Egyptian savior who adumbrated Christ by centuries. It is also the eye of the cyclops and the third or *ajna* eye of Shiva, which Phil (as Fat) attributes to Ikhnaton and his followers in the Tractates appended to *VALIS*. Others have placed a sexual interpretation upon it as well, but that's beyond the scope of the present work.

While listening to the Beatles, "Strawberry Fields Forever" one day, Phil heard the lyrics change into a prophetic warning: *Your son has an undiagnosed right inguinal hernia. The hydrocele has burst, and it has descended into the scrotal sac. He requires immediate attention, or will soon die.* Phil rushed him to the hospital and found every word to be true. The doctor scheduled the operation for the same day. Once again, the healing power of Phil's vision comes to the fore. In a sense the boy was "reborn", which was to have great consequences for Phil's subsequent actions.

For a while Phil thought the spirit of Elijah had come upon him, much as the followers of John the Baptist felt about their Master. He even identified with a certain first-century Christian he called Thomas, whose thoughts Phil heard while falling asleep. *There's someone inside of me, and he's living in another century.* This Thomas was eventually garroted, which provides the connection to John the Baptist. "Thomas" is a Greek name meaning "twin"; whose twin was he if not Phil's? (Mani's twin was also called "tawm"; extant Greek Manichean texts refer to him as "syzygon".) Phil saw fit to baptize and confirm his infant son at this time (he was Episcopalian). Phil then gave his son a secret name which has never been divulged. In the posthumously-published *Radio Free Albemuth*¹⁷ - the first version of what finally became *VALIS* - "Nicholas Brady" christened "Johnny" with the secret name "Paul". Since Phil saw himself as Elijah or John the Baptist, my best guess is that Phil told his son he was the Savior incarnate, and named him "Emmanuel", a Hebrew name meaning "God with us". His son's birth name was in fact Christopher, from the Greek for "Christ-bearer". Indeed, *Radio Free Albemuth* ends with the imprisoned Phil taking consolation in the knowledge that the Message has gone out after all - to the children. The importance of this assertion in light of the child-saviors in *VALIS* and *The Divine Invasion* cannot be underestimated. No wonder it hurt so badly when Phil's wife left with his son. It would have been interesting to see how Phil's son would have turned out under his father's tutelage. As it is, he may yet surprise us as he comes of age.

Phil's experiences culminated with a beatific vision of a Palm Tree Garden, which he described in *Deus Irae*¹⁸ and mentioned several times in *The Divine Invasion*¹⁹. Though this was still a part of first-century Rome, Phil felt at peace in the garden - the nostalgic Eden. The palm tree itself is the World Tree, the *axis mundi*, the pole at the center of the world which leads to heaven. Palm leaves were strewn before Christ when he returned to Jerusalem to indicate victory over temptation in the wilderness; today they are carried by those who have completed a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Palm Sunday commemorates this event in Christ's life. Palmer Eldritch's name is an obvious reference, but "palmer" could also refer to sleight of hand - indicating his position as malevolent demiurge.

Associated with the vision of the Palm Tree Garden was a young girl gathering water at riverside. On her vase was an interlocking pattern which Phil recognized as a series of ICHTHYS symbols. He also saw it as the double helix form of DNA. The universe, he understood, is information - just as DNA is the encoded information by which our bodies are created and maintained. He identified this girl with Aquarius, the water-bearer. To me this symbolizes a pouring out (from the subconscious) and the heralding of a new age. This scene was used in *VALIS* to announce the new messiah, the little girl called Sophia. A new age had indeed begun, short-lived as it was.

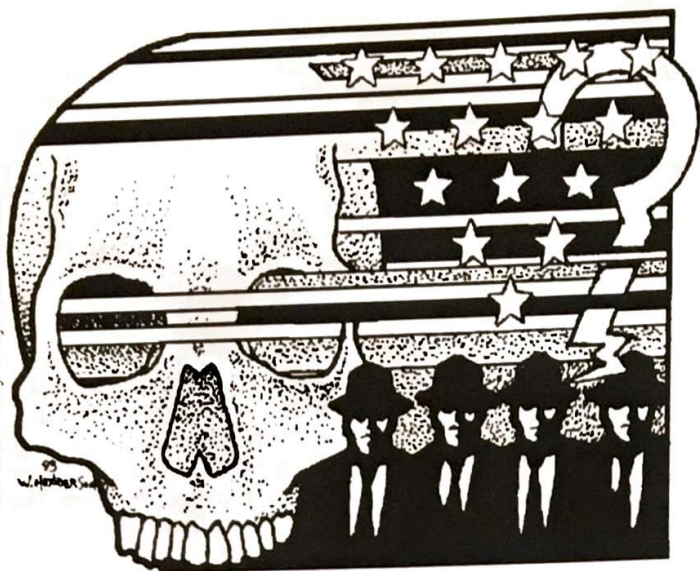
Though Phil's vision of Rome faded, his tutelary dream

continued for six more years. So too did the AI voice (for "Artificial Intelligence"), a soft feminine voice he heard in times of stress and during hypnotic reverie. Naturally he identified this voice with Jane/Sophia, and claims to have first heard it during a high school physics exam (it gave him the answers) 25 years earlier. It all ended November 17, 1980. Phil claimed to have had a theophany that day, though witnesses noticed nothing unusual. Phil suddenly comprehended God as infinite, by nature incomprehensible. In other words, the Exegesis would never solve anything because there was no answer to be had. Phil actually stopped writing for a time because of this, but was at it again before too long. He also wrote *The Divine Invasion* around this time, which was when the voice finally stopped. Had it not been for the theophany, Phil would have probably cried, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" As it was, he persisted in speculating the remaining year of his life, and managed to produce one more novel before the end - the posthumously-published *The Transmigration of Timothy Archer*²⁰. Phil suffered the first of several strokes in February 1982 and died several days later in the hospital, on March 2. He was 53.

NOTES

- (1) Philip K. Dick. *Confessions of a Crap Artist*. New York: Pocket Books, 1982. (Orig. 1975.) Pg. 164.
- (2) "Frozen Journey" was Playboy's name for the manuscript Phil called "I Hope I Shall Arrive Soon". It was reprinted under its original title most recently in *The Eye of the Sybil* (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1992).
- (3) *The Man in the High Castle*. New York: Putnam, 1962. This title has gone through several editions and remains in print.
- (4) *VALIS*. New York: Bantam, 1981.
- (5) *Time Out of Joint*. Boston: Gregg Press, 1979. (Orig. 1959.)
- (6) A very limited number of Exegesis entries were eventually published in *Selections from the Exegesis*, edited by PKD biographer Lawrence Sutin (Lancaster: Underwood-Miller, 1991). Sutin also wrote the excellent *Divine Invasions: A Life of Philip K. Dick* (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1991).
- (7) "Strange Memories of Death" first appeared in issue #8 of *Interzone* magazine (Brighton, UK). It also was collected in *I Hope I Shall Arrive Soon* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987) and volume 5 of Underwood-Miller's *Collected Stories* (reprinted by Carol Publishing Group).
- (8) *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*. Garden City: Doubleday, 1965.
- (9) Reference is to Phil's novel *UBIK* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1969).
- (10) *The Penultimate Truth*. New York: Belmont, 1964.
- (11) Revelations 18:2.
- (12) *Dr. Bloodmoney, or How We Got Along After the Bomb* (New York: Ace Books, 1965. Reprinted Boston: Gregg Press, 1977.). Another good example is the pair of lambs born near the end of *Confessions of a Crap Artist* (ibid), the second of which is stillborn. In this case it is the male twin Phil kills off - representing himself.
- (13) *Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said*. Garden City: Doubleday, 1975. (Phil parodied this book as *The Android Cried Me A River* in *VALIS*.)
- (14) See Julian Jaynes, *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind*. (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1976.)
- (15) *A Scanner Darkly*. Garden City: Doubleday, 1977.
- (16) Temple's book is little more than a well-researched paperback of the Ancient Astronaut variety. Only Phil could have turned it into a whole universe. (London: Futura Publications Ltd., 1979.) Robert Anton Wilson's *Cosmic Trigger* was also an influence in regards to the Sirius connection; Phil acknowledges it as such in *VALIS*. (Berkeley: And/Or Press, 1977. It's been reprinted by both Simon & Schuster and Falcon Press.)
- (17) *Radio Free Albemuth*. New York: Arbor House, 1985.
- (18) (w/ Roger Zelazny). *Deus Irae*. Garden City: Doubleday, 1976.
- (19) *The Divine Invasion*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1981.
- (20) *The Transmigration of Timothy Archer*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982.





JOIN THE CONSPIRACY!

*FORTEAN FASCINATION
WITH CONSPIRACY THEORY*

by Steve Mizrach

Many Fortean researchers admit to having a passing interest in conspiracy theories. Largely, it is due to the more general Fortean interest in 'hidden history' and anomalous theories of historical development. Many Forteans have also done research on the JFK assassination; certainly there were plenty of anomalies within that event, ranging from the two Oswalds (was one a doppelganger?) to the similarities between Lincoln and Kennedy and their deaths, to the very weird occult backgrounds of characters like David Ferrie, member of a strange offshoot of the Catholic Church. Largely, the JFK assassination moved conspiracy theorizing from a right-wing rant to a semi-serious endeavor. Conspiratologists have usually been nativists throughout American history, blaming the Pope or the Jews or British Masonry or foreigners for America's problems. But the left jumped into the conspiracy business after JFK's assassination, throwing in the Illuminati, the CIA, the Mafia, neo-Nazis, Cowboys and Yankees (the southwestern and northeastern Establishments), and the military-industrial complex. Left-wing conspiracy theories borrow heavily from Marx himself, who assumed that the ruling class (capitalists) used all sorts of clever secret manipulations to hide the contradictions of their society, and that capitalist democracy was a 'sham', with the 'power elite' making all the real decisions.

Essentially, conspiracy theory offers an alternative model of history itself, and Forteans are certainly willing to question existing models. Most historical analyses offer an *accidental* model of history: history is created by the sum of the random actions of the masses, like the 'invisible hand' which guides all economic actions to beneficial result; political assassinations are carried out by 'lone nuts', alienated and frustrated lunatics rather than conspiratorial agents serving an agenda; changes in governance (at least in democracy) are peaceful, orderly, and rational, within limits acceptable to the political center; impersonal sociological, technological, and economic forces cause social changes rather than individuals and secret societies acting with a quite specific purpose in mind. As Umberto Eco notes, conspiracy theories help to bring order to a disordered world. Rather than having to accept the fact that uncontrollable forces cause economic and social dislocations, we can point blame to a guiding hand in the misfortunes of history, and hopefully alleviate our social problems by releas-

ing the grip of that hand.

Not all conspiracy theories are that sinister. Most occult groups posit a *benevolent* conspiracy, a "great white brotherhood" of mystical adepts guiding human evolution from behind the scenes. The very word *conspiracy* means nothing more wicked than "breathing together." (One can imagine a circle of Tibetan lamas sitting around some mystic sphere, planning the revolutions and evolutions the human race needs to ascend to the godhood that is its birthright.) Of course, most occult groups suspect that there is a counter-conspiracy of black adepts blocking the efforts of the good guys at every turn, seeking to seize the Grail (or whatever humanity needs for its salvation) and destroy it. Within this model, secret societies have secret rituals and passwords and so forth not so much to hide their evil actions from scrutiny, but to conceal esoteric knowledge from the uninitiated *until the time is appropriate*. This is said to reflect the admonitions of the Gospel, namely, "cast not pearls before swine." Man may not be morally ready for secret knowledge; one need only look at his use of atomic energy to see that, which some groups suggest is just one of the first occult secrets that man has re-discovered (it was known to the alchemists, according to some).

One of the books to give conspiracy theories a great deal of impetus during the 1960s was the book *Illuminatus!* by Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson. The novel proposed that the supersecret Illuminati were agents of Lovecraftian Elder Things from the depths of space, but they were being fought by the Discordians, a group of Eris-worshipping freethinkers, anarchists, and rebels. (Eris was the goddess of discord and chaos in the Greek mythology; the only deity not invited to reside on Apollonian Mount Olympus.) Not surprisingly, Wilson is quite a Fortean himself, having written a blistering attack on those enforcers of consensus reality, the so-called skeptics of CSICOP. Today, in the 1990s, conspiratologists have received a new shot in the arm: just look at the signs of the times. The movie JFK, BCCI, BNL, Iraqgate, Iran-Contra, and Bush's "New World Order." The revelations of the CIA's MKULTRA and COINTELPRO operations. Ross Perot's fascination with the POW/MIA and "Narcotrafficking" conspiracies. Lyndon LaRouche running for president. The P2 Lodge in Italy and the Vatican Bank scandal. Kenneth Collier's Votescam. Many of these and

more are detailed by conspiratologist Jonathan Vankin.

The Birth of History

We can blame the Persians (doesn't everybody?) for inventing history, and ultimately conspiracy theory. It was a Magian named Zoroaster who first challenged the dominant notion of time in the ancient world. Most societies, like the ancient Maya, felt time was an ever-cyclical round of being: what was, will be again, and again. Zoroaster proposed that history was a line: it had a beginning, a span, and an eschatological end. The angels of Ahura Mazda and the devils of Ohrmazd would struggle for 8000 years, with man being forced to choose sides, and then everything would be brought to an end. This vision of history would filter into Judaism through the Persian conquest, become a basic component of Essene doctrine, be absorbed by Christianity, and thereby become the predominant *Weltanschauung* of Western history. Almost all of our models of history—whether we believe in Progress toward a glorious positivist, classless future or a Fall from some traditional Golden Age before time again—are based on such a linear model.

The basis of this model is that history is a finite line, and that line is moving toward some predetermined goal within a larger cosmic Plan. (Modern science still subscribes to the concept of a finite time—the Big Bang began the universe and the Big Crunch will end it—and has enshrined the doctrine of the Fall within the concept of Entropy: all things decay and proceed toward disorder.) The idea that there is a Plan behind history is the key idea for conspiracy theorists. In our era, the old religious idea that the goal of the Plan is salvation and that the conspiracy working against it is that of Satan, that old serpent, has given way to more materialistic/atheistic conceptions. The International Bankers' Conspiracy may be to amass the world's wealth through usury and put us all under control of One World Government, but this is just the old Gnostic/Cathar idea of the Devil as *Rex Mundi*, King of the World, under a new guise. But most conspiratologists trace the International Bankers back to the Templars, themselves 'infected' with Gnostic or Islamic heresy, anyway.

Under the view of time which prevailed in matrifocal, agricultural societies, even the idea of history was not

possible. Most societies accepted that there were alternating forces ruling the universe—one masculine, the other feminine, usually—but that there was simply a continual oscillation of power between them. (This is the central concept of Taoism) There was no struggle for ultimate victory, no fixed period where the contest between them would be held, no situation where mankind was forced to choose sides between the white hats and the black. Death itself was not that important, as people would be reborn in a new incarnation, as part of the ceaseless turning of the wheel of metempsychosis. As the seasons turned and returned, so would the human soul, in a new form. In the Aryo-Persian vision, life became a concrete span, fixed



The danger of conspiracy theorizing is that it can lead to such demonization and scapegoating - if not of Jews, then of Catholics, Masons, or people named Rockefeller. Whether called 'ethnic hygiene' or 'ethnic cleansing,' such notions often lead to genocide.



in itself, and one's actions would determine their fate in the afterlife - paradise or damnation, heaven or hell. You either were for Ahura Mazda, and became a Zoroastrian, or you were a heretic and quite certainly against him. One could escape the embrace of Mother Earth, who was womb and tomb, and take your place among the thunder gods of the sky, if one obeyed Mazdean precepts. Which "conspiracy" you chose to support became of vital importance.

Struggling against the Counter Conspiracy

Almost every secret or conspiratorial organization posits the existence of a counter-conspiracy that they must fight and which requires conspiratorial tactics. The hooded knights of the Holy

Vehm hunted down the conspiracy of witches, sorcerers, and heretics trying to overthrow the Carolingian throne, afraid to reveal their identities lest the traitors within the court know who they were. So too did the hooded knights of the Kuklux Klan (*kuklos* means circle in Greek) mask their identities so as to root out the foul Carpetbaggers, Abolitionists, and Scalawags concealed within Southern society seeking to destroy its genteel ways. The nativist Know-Nothing Party took that name so as to signify that they would say they "knew nothing" if asked questions by infiltrators who were secret Papists or Masons. Comic book heroes of the 1940s and 50s wore masks and had secret identities because they were afraid that their families and friends might become targets of their identities. Even today, that arch-secret society known as the CIA maintains one of the reasons it must carry out covert operations is due to the presence of Communist 'fellow-travelers' and 'fifth columnists' here in America who report back to their Moscow masters about what our government plans to do to fight the Communist World-dominators.

So too did the early Christians meet in secret in the Catacombs, to hide from that Great Beast 666, who was (to them) the Roman Emperor Nero and his minions. In the eschatological vision that developed when the immanent Kingdom of Heaven failed to materialize, Christians came to suppose that the Great Beast was an Antichrist who would put them through a tribulation before the return of their Messiah. Like the Essenes before them, they felt that the Forces of Light and the Forces of Darkness would engage in a titanic struggle. As the Book of Revelations portends, the servants of the Lamb and the fallen angels of Lucifer will struggle one last time, and with the victory of the Ancient of Days, the New Jerusalem and the Kingdom will be inaugurated. This pattern is deceptively simple: the white hats versus the black hats; but is a template that seems to be used in a wide variety of places. Look at Richard Shaver's vision, where the evil underground *deros* fought with the *teros*, servants of the noble Titans from the sky, for the possession of man's soul using 'telogs' and evil rays. Or all the 'weird science' groups like Borderland Sciences who claim we would have free energy,

a cure for cancer, antigravity, and one hour orgasms, if the government weren't conspiring to keep such things hidden from us.

UFOlogy seems to be in the grip of just such a template right now. As John Keel notes, the idea is as old as man himself: the sons of Heaven versus the forces of darkness. In modern, 'scientific' UFOlogy we see it scripted in a new way: the sinister, manipulative Grays versus the benevolent, friendly Pleideans. One can see it in L. Ron Hubbard's vast intergalactic conspiracy tale (described in his fiction books, but also a key part of Dianetics) where one group of space beings tries to help man climb the evolutionary ladder while another group tries to imprison him in his animalistic state. And, buying into the pattern, the UFOlogists assume the U.S. government is part of some vast conspiracy with the wicked Grays, having given them operating bases here on Earth and free rein to abduct humans and mutilate cattle, in exchange for alien technology. (A Faustian bargain with the devil?) There is some argument as to when this agreement was reached, but the current version is that this contract with the devil was signed at Holloman Air Force Base in 1964. Watching the descent of some UFOlogists into abject paranoia can be somewhat depressing.

From Paranoia to Metanoia

Laird Wilcox has examined many political extremist movements, and identifies many of their central properties in his essay "What is political extremism?" One of those salient features was what Wilcox calls "the politics of paranoia": all these groups presupposed that the reason they could not implement their agenda (whatever goals that might encompass) was not due to any type of public disagreement over the issue; but rather that there existed some sort of coalition of forces—a conspiracy if you will—to keep knowledge from the public. If they only knew—about the miracles of laetrile and the depredations of "Cancer, Inc.", let's say—they would surely rise up to take up the cause of the movement. Politics is ultimately about sex, money, and power; and almost all existing coalitions—based on ideology or "the cause"—are inevitably short-lived unless they offer their constituents one of the three. Not surprisingly, the villainous group of

obstacles to political progress is inevitably described as being motivated by some sort of financial gain. ("Free energy" is kept locked up from the public so that Big Oil can tighten its grip on our wallets, etc.) But the crusaders are never described as being motivated by those things...

One of the documents floating around the world of conspiratology is the so-called *Gemstone File*. Ostensibly about the JFK assassination, this document contains a subplot about the manufacturing of rubies (for use in lasers? It isn't always clear.) In any case, the file ties together so many of the confusing events of the past 30 years, if you believe it. Watergate, JFK and RFK's assassination, the Bay of Pigs, Chappaquiddick, and Hoffa's disappearance are tied together in a seamless web. It almost seems as if with yet another great sweep, it might take in Marilyn Monroe's mysterious death, the slaying of John Lennon, and the murder of MLK, with the wave of a hand. The essential thesis of the *Gemstone File* is that Aristotle Onassis controlled the Mafia and the Southeast Asia drug trade, and not a small number of politicians (including Roosevelt, Nixon, and JFK) as well. Along the way, he apparently used a "double" to take control of Howard Hughes' financial empire, planted cronies to seize almost all the national organized labor groups, and, like a true Mafioso, murdered (with poisoned apple pie) just about anybody that got in his way.

Another interesting document making its way around more metaphysically oriented conspiracy researchers is the so-called "Spiritual Liberation primer." This document suggests that rebellious spiritual beings were behind the psychedelic, sexual, and political revolutions of the 1960s, and that they are acting as evolutionary agents for humanity. Opposing them, however, are the so-called "Theocrats." These spiritual beings created all the organized religions so that they could "eat" the souls of worshippers and devotees at death, and their goal is the spiritual imprisonment of man. He is to be kept ignorant of his own nature and kept a slave to their whims. "Theocratic" religious doctrines focus very heavily on the 'sinfulness' of disobedience and the importance of 'faith', i.e. blind trust. Apparently, the "Theocrats" and the

"Maverick" spirits are engaged in struggle for who will control the destiny of humankind. The book contains a wise warning to all would-be channelers: consider the words of spirits, for some messages may be coming from "Theocrats" in disguise! One can easily see why fundamentalist Christians shirked the rebellious Lucifer.

These documents almost seem to take paranoia and transform it into metanoia. You get the sense that almost every tragedy, every political misfortune, every scandal, is the result of the Onassis Mob or the Theocrats jerking all our strings. Paranoia is the sense that you as an individual are being persecuted by some outside agency. But metanoia is a sense of collective injustice: that somehow each and everyone of us is at the mercy of invisible forces we cannot control. Hieronymus Bosch's paintings and some of Philip K. Dick's writings convey this sense of metaphysical conspiracy. Dick's sinister police-state universe seemed run by forces beyond the IRS or CIA: almost as if a band of Gnostic Archons was pulling their strings. Many mystic writers have pointed out that the metanoid conviction—that the universe is infinitely unjust and is so vast as to drown you in your insignificance and all of its forces are, indeed, watching your efforts and pitched against you—is part of the "Dark Night of the Soul" or "Chapel Perilous" from which true enlightenment can follow, if one has the courage to cross the Abyss. Metanoia can lead to some amazing insights. If it seems as if our world is being run by madmen, Gurdjieff reminds us that it is... because they are all robots. They can no more be held responsible for their actions than someone thrashing in his sleep. But metanoia also can lead to Gnostic anarchism as well, which is not surprising...

Even Paranoids have Enemies?

The bottom line, I suppose, is: are conspiracy theories mainly an engaging diversion? Or is there really one massive Conspiracy, as the Church of the SubGenius supposes, to keep us from holy Slack? Modern conspiracy rosters have long list of nefarious organizations: the Trilateral Commission; the Council on Foreign Relations; the Bilderbergers; certain families such as the Rockefellers, Harrimans, or Rothschilds; the Federal Reserve; the

IMF, World Bank, and other Bretton-Woods institutions; Freemasonry; the British royal family; the Illuminati; "Narcotrafficking" cabals, etc. Almost all seem to take their lead from the 'first lady' of conspiratology, Nesta Webster, and lay the blame on one specific group of people: Jews. They may not be open about it - they may talk about Zionists or 'elders of Zion' or 'international bankers' but they often are really talking about the Jews. Certainly, I get nervous when people talk about the Jews controlling Hollywood or the major media or the banks. (If the last is true, it certainly could help my credit rating.) They always seem to roll off a roster of names ending in "stein" or "berg" and then ask leading questions like "And why is such a small minority group high up in so many positions of power..." Hatred of Jews has changed from the blood libel myths of the Middle Ages and accusations that they caused the Black Plague, to its more virulent modern form, based on mistaken notions of "race" and "nationality."

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, a forgery concocted almost certainly by a Russian Okhrana (secret police) officer named Sergei Nilus, from a 19th century document by Maurice Joly about a fictitious dialogue between Napoleon and Machiavelli, is the arch-conspiracy tale of all time. Nilus probably altered the story not so much to embarrass Jews — he was certainly an anti-Semite — as to expose the Freemasons who were so prominent in the Romanov court. After all, why would a group of non-Masons sign anything as "elders of Zion of the 33rd degree" since there are 33 degrees in Scottish Rite Masonry? The Protocols describe a group of conspirators seeking to destabilize all the world's government through a host of villainies — fomenting revolutions, devaluing currencies, provoking wars — so that they can take

over the world and rule it for their King. For people who remembered the chaos of 1848, it seemed like a plausible scenario. The Protocols led to many anti-Jewish pogroms in Eastern Europe, and may have contributed to the Holocaust by influencing the Nazis. Even today the Protocols are standard reading among radical Palestinian and Arab nationalist groups, which is not surprising since many terrorist groups there were trained by Edward Skorzesny, an ex-S.S. officer from Germany.

The danger of conspiracy theorizing is that it can lead to such demonization and scapegoating - if not of Jews, then of Catholics, Masons, or people named Rockefeller. Finding a scapegoat is convenient: the ancient Hebrews would place all their sins upon the 'Azazel' (scape-goat) and then drive it into the wilderness to rid themselves of evil. It enables a society to somehow localize evil and cast it out, and to remove a fixed 'disease' from the body politic. Whether called 'ethnic hygiene' or 'ethnic cleansing,' such notions often lead to genocide. Conspiracies always will exist: groups of individuals will conspire for short-term goals and interests, and people are right to be watchful of such things. But the notion that there is some fixed Enemy who has operated throughout history, threatening Civilization itself since the beginning, is merely the "Devil theory" updated for the modern age. And it is a poisonous and dangerous idea. It is one thing to examine a temporary confluence of interests for an immediate political goal, such as the JFK or Lincoln assassinations. But I am wary of those people, like the LaRouchites, who try and extend conspiracies throughout all time. They are often as dangerous as the conspiracy they imagine themselves to be struggling against.



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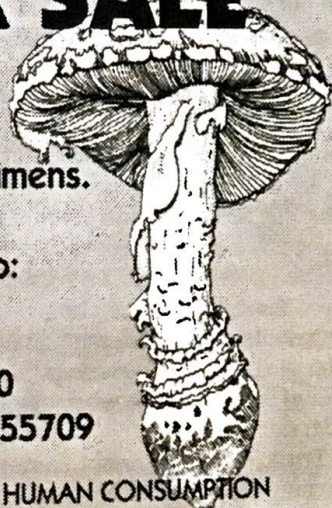
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The Warhollian Conspiracy

by X.S. DeSpot

"Everyone will be famous for fifteen minutes."
- Andy Warhol.

In the aftermath of the April, 1992 Los Angeles riot, two different views were expressed by two different conspiracy-oriented groups. The Liberty Lobby, led by Willis Carto, Jr., blamed it on the news media giving publicity to irresponsible persons, leading them on to riot. The followers of Lyndon LaRouche presented another view. They blamed the riot on groups of armed men, apparently conscious agents of a plot, who roamed the streets. In other words, this was not an uprising of spontaneous anger; it was a carefully constructed plot. Both these views miss the point entirely. THE LOS ANGELES RIOT WAS A TOTALLY STAGED EVENT.

Most of the participants probably did not see it that way. Be they relatively non-violent opportunistic looters, malicious mobs, or simply destruction-happy arsonists without even a pretense of moral outrage, they regarded themselves as free individuals, *doing what they wanted to do*. Unfortunately, they are probably wrong. The repeated showings of the videotaped beating of Rodney King by Los Angeles policemen was intentional programming to build up the violence instinct. The verdict, whether stage-managed or fair, was simply the match that set off the gun powder injected into the minds of the populace of Los Angeles by the news media.

The views of the Liberty Lobby and Lyndon LaRouche are similar in their assumption that the violence was part of a larger plan of world conquest by a mysterious "them" under the bed. The mysterious "them" they fear exists only inside of their minds. So what was the goal of these events? *To create celebrities*.

Truck driver Reginald Denny had the misfortune of becoming the new celebrity sparked by the riot, but so long as the TV cameras were there, there would have been another.

After all, who doesn't remember the man with the shopping bags who stopped three tanks with his moral outrage during the 1989 Tiananmen Square protest? In the aftermath former LA Police Chief Daryl Gates became a new celebrity in a city whose primary function is *to turn out celebrities*. Indeed, the spectacle of an emotionally devastated Rodney King pleading, "Could we all just get along?" made him world-renown overnight, broadcast by CNN to every corner of the globe.

THE YANKEE AND COWBOY WAR REVISITED

Carl Oglesby, in his 1976 book *The Yankee and Cowboy War*, proposed that two ruling blocs, the East Coast "Yankee" bankers and the West Coast "Cowboy" (high frontier/high tech) industrialists, were waging a secret war against each other. The competition between the two blocs led to the assassination of President Kennedy and the placement of Lyndon Baines Johnson in power. It led to the murder of Robert Kennedy at a *Los Angeles* hotel. It led to both Nixon's Watergate and President Ronald Wilson Reagan's "Star Wars" program. Where Oglesby goes wrong is in his assumption that the goals of these two groups could actually be met by conspiring against each other. Considering the narrowness of American politics, Johnson could have been killed at Dallas and Kennedy could have survived, and in all probability things would have continued on the same suicidal path to Vietnam. So what is actually going on?

In fact, it isn't Yankees or Cowboys. It's Hollywood. MCA-Universal, the giant, Japanese-owned entertainment conglomerate, has well-established ties to the Syndicate through Sidney Korshak. The MCA conglomerate gave President Ronald Reagan his first major financial break, making him a multimillionaire in the early 1960's. Doesn't it strike anyone as odd that a seemingly inept Hollywood actor best known for *Bedtime for Bonzo* and *King's Row* was given control of the United States' nuclear arsenal? The answer is

simple. Reagan was simply a glass front for the true political power in this country: Hollywood. Obviously, the Hollywood stars are not always that astute. Cher, James Gardner, and Sharon Stone are a trivial aristocracy. Yet one has to ask, why do they get so much attention?

THE "LIBERALLY-BIASED" CONSERVATIVELY-CONTROLLED NEWS MEDIA

Paradox: The news media is liberal. The owners of all media outlets that people actually read - not jokes like *The Nation* - are conservatives. What's going on? *Celebrities*. Celebrities are the major product line of our times. They go beyond left, right, or center. They are known on every corner of the world. For all the complaints about the news media, most of what people actually read is celebrity news. Celebrities do not always have universal appeal, yet it goes without saying that even those who ignore celebrities know who Marilyn Monroe is.

People, who at heart are still what they were 2000 years ago, appeal best to other people. Abstractions like dialectics, theology, and economics are difficult and unwieldy things. But celebrities? Half the heterosexual males on the planet are aroused by a film of Marilyn Monroe singing "I Want To Be Loved By You".

The recent MCA-Universal movie *Jurassic Park* will probably go down similarly in any country on the planet. Sylvester Stallone's recent movie *Cliffhanger*, with its taunt pacing, stereotyped characters, and well-crafted plot (even if it is, on the surface, ridiculous) will go down so well that it could be seen as a world cultural product. Critics may attack these movies as mediocre or banal, but the point is that celebrities are the only road to a world culture guaranteed to work.

LEE HARVEY OSWALD:

A FRAMED LONE-NUT ASSASSIN

Despite the success of the movie *JFK* there is still a sort of pall hanging over the land that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone. Let us take this as simply as possible. For there to be one gunman, the maximum allowable shots at the time of the assassination is three (from Oswald's rifle).

One shot was the fatal "head shot". One shot struck a curb and wounded bystander James Teague. The third shot is claimed to have gone through both Kennedy and Connally, and then finally fallen out of Connally onto a stretcher at Parkland Hospital. This bullet, CE 399, is the "magic bullet". However, fragments taken from Connally's wrist are not from bullet CE 399. Therefore, four shots were fired. Oswald could not have been acting alone unless bullet CE 399 was a plant, and only three shots were fired! Could evidence have been planted to convince people of a conspiracy when none was present? In other words, a conspiracy to plant a conspiracy?

As singer Mel Torme said, the assassination of Oswald and Jack Ruby seemed like something out of a grade B movie. Nobody would have believed it could happen in the real world. Indeed, which makes less sense: a conspiracy which kills its patsy live on national television to tip off literally millions of a cover-up, or 122 cops being unable to protect the one man they were assigned to protect? And the killing took place on television?

Was the whole assassination a staged media event? Certainly President Kennedy died; certainly Oswald could have acted alone or been framed by others (they would have had to have access to his gun to obtain bullet number CE 399,

the "magic bullet", by firing it into water). It takes on an air of unreality once you realize that officially the case was closed in the year 1964, yet at least two new paperback books about the assassination of Kennedy appear on the stands each month.

Jackie O., Aristotle, Oswald, Monroe, Cher, Madonna, Brando, Sinatra, Elvis, Liberace: people so

famous they barely need two names. JFK, RFK, MLK, Malcolm X: these people are so well known that they don't need full names. They are celebrities.

ECONOMIC INTEGRATION VS. NATIONAL IDENTITY

The idea of "Us", a cohesive group worth fighting for, is one of the most powerful things in the history of mankind. Why else would some Nebraska farm boy in 1917 have gone to die in France against the armies of the Kaiser, if the people of France weren't considered one of "Us" who deserved "Our" help?

The loyalty idea became a bit strained. It is doubtful that anyone in the United States could have cared less about the Vietnamese who got blown up by the millions in an attempt to ensure the survival of what was supposed to be "their" government, the Republic of South Vietnam. Nevertheless, if the current fighting in the Balklands spreads to Greece, probably the whole of United Europe and the United States will come in to fight to protect "Us", the people of Greece.

The far right, of course, really dislikes internationalization. They often have a policy, be it isolationist or interventionist, which regards the rest of the world as merely a stage play, a mirror for distinctly American hopes, fears, and dreams. Yet the biggest internationalists in the world are the multinational corporations, with their culture of conspicuous consumption and their much-maligned Hollywood-style entertainment. In foreign countries, fear of American cultural imperialism is fairly strong. Yet they don't seem to have much luck in stopping the transnational integration which makes this possible.

It seems obvious that those who are opposed to international integration are caught in a trap: if they refuse to

allow international integration, their economies stagnate and die. If they try to influence it, usually they are admitting defeat: we can't get rid of it so we have to tame it to our own needs. Far more likely, of course, is that internationalization will tame them. Unless international economic integration by multinational corporations is stopped, a world culture will emerge. Already a vestigial one is in place, and that world culture can best be spread *through the mass media by celebrities.*

HOLLYWOOD TAKES OVER

Politics on both the national and international level are becoming more and more a media-staged event. General Norman Schwarzkopf and Saddam Hussein are just two world-renown media celebrities, both of whom understood the need to use the news media. Although Saddam seemed a total chump compared to Schwarzkopf's professionalism, he did endeavor to be defeated while being televised. The CNN correspondent was censored, but never removed from the air. When the ground war was over, CNN was ejected and Saddam proceeded to murder Iraq's Kurdish minority in peace - until they showed up starving on the Turkish border where the undeniable disaster and pitiful sight of the Kurds gave Americans one of the few raw, unvarnished looks at the true face of war, after six months of carefully stage-managed media baloney.

In September of 1992, on the 22nd, I watched presidential candidate Bill Clinton give a speech. Each statement was a thirty-second long "sound bite" designed to be carried on the network news. It was everything an audience could gladly agree to, so the networks showed a cheering, enthusiastic crowd in the city of East Lansing, Michigan that night. *The whole thing was one celebrity lovefest.* The national Republican and Democratic conventions are just staged media events in which no actual political discussion takes place.

Question: How can a news media event election lead to a true democratic choice? Answer: It can not. Politics has become an MGM spectacle, without Dorey Shary, Irving Thalberg, or Louis B. Mayer.

THE ASSEMBLY LINES ARE OUT OF CONTROL

Once, assembly lines were instructed by monopolizing capitalists what to build. Then committees of corporate managers told the assembly lines what to build based on marketing research. Today the assembly lines (but not the workers) tell the corporate managers what to do. The assembly lines must be kept humming, otherwise the economy collapses. If X number of automobiles are necessary for the company's survival, then the corporate managers strive mightily to create demand for X number of automobiles.

Worldwide, multinational corporations are faced with two paradoxes: they must sell to survive, but they must become more efficient and lower the cost-per-unit price of what they sell. They must increase demand while keeping prices high and production costs low. They cannot afford to drop prices to spur demand; they must use advertising, mass media advertising. What do people read, watch, and listen to the media for? *Celebrities.*

SUBLIMINAL CONTENT

Subliminal content in advertising is one of America's great taboos. It is being done constantly, in all forms of the news media, but to so much as breathe a word of it is to be labelled insane, beyond the pale, beyond even the political fringe. Nevertheless, images of sex, death, dogs, flying saucers, even Christ and Greek statues and the "eye in the pyramid"

can be found.

The content of these subliminal-content tricks is pretty basic: sex, death, resurrection, and supernatural things. Magic and mysticism: the unconscious mind and symbolism, by any other name.

THE RESURRECTION OF ELVIS

A pattern is emerging, treated basically as a joke, much as a lone miracle worker and twelve fishermen who followed him around must have been treated as a joke by the first-century Romans. The resurrection of Elvis Aron Presley has begun. Already major news media outlets have covered the growth of belief in a supernatural Elvis. In his biting satire *Ambient*, author Jack Womack has predicted an emerging monotheistic Elvis-worshipping church. Being satire, of course, it is not to be taken too seriously. Yet even as it is regarded as little more than a money-making "silly season" joke, the emergence of occult beliefs about Elvis is clear.

There is little doubt in my mind that Madonna, who apparently has had 2000-plus articles written about her in the last five years or so, owes much of her success to subliminal content in the news media. She obviously has played upon a wide variety of pre-existing images, which explains her constant hair style and costume changes. She has copied Marilyn Monroe and Dita, a European actress of the 1930's and 1940's. Copying Marlena Dietrich in a tuxedo and top hat will be along eventually. Of course, she is recycling old images, a sign of decay, but the decay will only last until she finds a new image for herself to create. If she keeps her ear to the ground, she will remain a world-renown, fashionable celebrity.

Is it hard to imagine her as a Voodoo priestess, possessed by Marilyn Monroe, Dietrich, and Dita, being "ridden" by them? She knows the primal instincts she taps into, dabbling in taboo to sell her records, movies, and videotapes. (Her movies have almost always been critical bombs, but financially they have succeeded.) Already there are computer programs which "think" they are living persons. Is it hard to imagine a gigantic computerized celebrity storage bank providing immortality to Madonna, allowing her to live forever as a computerized image?

Even this extreme situation is not necessary, however. The need for new celebrities to increase production through mass media consumption (and the not-so-subtle promotion of products as seen in the movie *Jurassic Park*) will push forth a new generation of mass media celebrities, spreading a corporate-sponsored culture across the surface of the world. As the needs of mass media entertainment, world economics, and of course personal ego (the larger the better) collide in a glorious slow-motion ballet dance of death, sex, staged mass media violence, and product tie-ins, national identity will fade into a sea of celebrities. After all, abstractions like politics have little concrete meaning, but even a staged, cliché cops-and-robbers drama has impact. When the film is well-made it's impact can be devastating; just ask Bogart and Bacall.

THE BAD NEWS IS THE GOOD NEWS IS RIGHT

One dominant theme among most conspiracy theorists is that "they" are in control. The whole point is that "they" probably do not exist, and even if they do, are not controlling this. Everybody, regardless of position in the class structure, Rockefeller or homeless person, is being swept away in the celebrity nightmare/wet dream of the 20th century. Those expecting a total destruction of civilization are as wrong as

those who dream of a conservative victory over unwanted social change. Both are simply talking through their hats, and have no idea what they are talking about.

A nuclear apocalypse is still possible, but it's far more likely that even the "first strike" generals will discover the world swept out from under them. A celebrity general named Schwarzkopf runs a talk-show style war. The celebrity tide washes over him, the moral authority of Richard Gere stronger than that of Mao's Inevitable Dialectic of History. The information highway opens up, computerized Madonna videos blasting aside the rickety structures of the nation-state. Dead celebrities are resurrected as computerized images attract hordes of followers, with increased sightings of Elvis, Monroe, UFO's, and in the end even Andy Warhol, seemingly real, made flesh, immortal.

The difference between stage-managed events like the L.A. riots and the national political conventions is already becoming thinner and thinner. The subject is the meaning, to quote the police, and the liberal-conservative-moderate-radical spectrum cannot keep up. The inevitable dialectic of history shatters like glass and authoritarianism becomes impossible once more.

Obviously, this is not the best of all possible situations. If people are being manipulated below the conscious threshold (which, of course, they are), then freedom is imperiled. Yet the situation is getting better. Although feeding the whole world is difficult, far larger portions of it do not have to starve as they do now. As Buckminster Fuller has shown, "doing more with less" can provide enough for most, if not all. Paradise is unachievable, utopia is meaningless, but inevitably the need to keep the assembly lines going is going to mean everyone on Earth will need to be prosperous enough to consume. Obviously, there are reasons to doubt if material-driven values are all that fantastic, but I don't see any real alternative to a world of peace and prosperity, not when nuclear bombs threaten to wipe the planet clean.

The propaganda - not necessarily of materialism - is going to come through celebrity role models. With mass subliminal content, religious symbolism in Madonna rock videos ("Like A Prayer" on cable channel VH-1), stage-managed riots aimed at creating new celebrities, and mass media feeding frenzies such as the current Woody Allen tiff, celebrity worship becomes even more powerful. Magical thinking and occult powers spread and are attributed to celebrities. Is this what we, the people of the world, want? Maybe not, maybe so, but we're getting it.

We are getting mass abandonment of the news media, and the entertainment media as well. Anti-television fanaticism is unlikely to change the situation until people realize the economic motivation behind mass celebrities. (Clive James' *Fame in the 20th Century* should be required reading in all schools.) So long as the assembly lines are dominant over the decision-making process, so long as their need to be kept running is above the needs of those who ostensibly benefit from them and control them, *this situation will exist*.

Perhaps the solution lies in trying to avoid dehumanizing people in their everyday lives with voice-mail and anonymous bosses. The growth of institutions and celebrities at the same time cannot be a coincidence. The less alienated an individual is from his immediate environment and the less helpless he is, the less significant celebrities overall will be.

Nevertheless, at this stage it is clear enough where we are going: material prosperity and spiritual strangeness, not emptiness. We are already empty enough. We could not survive as human beings (or remain sane and have an active civilization) if we became any emptier than we are now. Ironically, the mass outpouring of grief at the funeral of Rudolf Valentino may be the beginning of mass humanization, not mass dehumanization. After all, it was grief over a man few had met, but many had known.

The Warholian Conspiracy will not be stopped by those seeking plots under the bed, but by those seeking to understand a world without a paranoid fear of "them". In the meantime, celebrities as a function of human societies will continue to grow. The economic forces of the 20th century will launch new MGMs (probably Michael Ovit's Creative Artists Agency), more national and international celebrities. The new high-tech society of the Hollywood age will demand new forms of Hollywood sex and sexuality, bringing about a hallucinatory wet dream of Sharon Stone, Alex Baldwin, and Elvis. Robot assembly lines churning out new Paris fashions, mass celebrity-oriented "Hollywood" movies (*In the Line of Fire* with Clint Eastwood, for example) will be made. Curious new social manifestations, and an increase in serial killers and satanic (as well as non-violent Marilyn Monroe and Madonna) cults will proliferate among Nintendo video games and virtual-reality architecture on seven continents. Disneyland will arise in Europe, then the former Soviet Union, finally blossoming among the Chinese-made Jeep Eagles of the Chrysler Corporation beside the Great Wall of China. Bizarre new sexual practices blending together with the stigmata of 1959 Cadillac Eldorado Biarritz convertibles with mighty tailfins sweeping out behind them among the thundering towers of steel, glass, and snow-white cons of the multinationals.

Supermarket tabloids and Holy Bibles blending together in a Jack Chickian nightmare of neo-Nazi Lyndon LaRouchian pseudo-totalitarianistic occultism. The Temple of Set, Aleister Crowley, and cattle mutilation hoaxes blend in with *I Love Lucy* reruns in rural backwaters of Malaysia via illegal satellite dishes as Bobbie Battista on CNN becomes the masturbation fantasy of South Korean soldiers in lonely outposts along the demilitarized zone. Blank Rolodexes of time compressing into pseudo-scientific Reichian orgone energy amidst the blaring horns of traffic stopped during the Los Angeles riots. Reginald Denny becomes Pogo: "We have found the enemy, and it is us!"

Post-postmodernism will come into being.

We still have choices, but so long as we don't act the situation will not be resolved; it will be evolved into ever more absurd and bizarre future-shockian mass media nightmares and wet dreams. The option is open, the time is now, and the copies of *Fame in the 20th Century* are on sale.

Be warned. You are about to experience something wonderful and strong, terrible and mighty, but not clear. Believe me, confusion between real and false will grow and grow unless something is done. It has to be done now.

"Just like a prayer you can take me there,
Just like a dream you are not what you seem."
- Madonna.

"Art? That's somebody's name."
- Warhol.



Dialogues at the Edge of the West: Chaos, Creativity, and the Resacralization of the World.

Ralph Abraham, Terence McKenna, Rupert Sheldrake.
Santa Fe: Bear & Company, 1992. \$12.95.

A Jew, a Christian, and a Scientist walk into a saloon and God is tending the bar... well, not exactly. *Dialogues* is actually a transcript of an Esalen workshop presided over by three of today's most interesting underground philosophers. The title was coined to suggest a revival of the format of Plato's Socratic dialogues, expanded to "dialogues" to reflect the nature of this distinguished triumvirate.

Unlike this review, *Dialogues* does not begin with the lead-in to a bad joke. It rather begins with an introduction from Jean Houston with a delightful anecdote about a childhood meeting with Edgar Bergen. It seems her father knew the man, and took her to see him when he could. On one such occasion they walked in unannounced and were surprised to see Bergen conversing with his most famous dummy, Charlie McCarthy. It soon became obvious this was no standard rehearsal, for Bergen was asking McCarthy about the meaning of life, the future of mankind and other weighty topics. When confronted, Bergen replied he never knew how McCarthy was going to answer these questions, but they talked like this whenever they got the chance. To Houston, this untapped source of power is a vital part of what these three wise men discuss in *Dialogues*.

A large portion of the book is occupied with cosmogony. The speakers draw heavily on the latest findings in chaos theory, and wonder why there's existence instead of non-existence. Quantum mechanics verified the existence of truly random forces in the universe, yet chaos theory has come up with some astounding ways to impose certain patterns on some of these processes. Fractal geometry is the result. Although the mechanistic view of the universe so popular in the nineteenth century seemed the culmination of the Renaissance's search for God through the measurement, classification, and control of nature, randomness is the unknown in the equation that makes the possibility real.

Much of the discussion focuses on the idea of *attractors*, mathematicians' word for the trend of random physical processes to seem to be pulled toward a certain state rather than being pushed by the laws of nature. McKenna eagerly takes this one step further, and speculates that the whole universe is being pulled by its own attractor toward some unknown - possibly cataclysmic - finale. He has plotted what he calls "novelty" throughout history, and determines it peaks in 2012. This is when he figures the apocalypse will occur. The coincidence of the Mayan calendar also ending on this date strengthens his belief. Some discussion of Christian

millennial groups also takes place, and the significance of a new millennium. One way in which McKenna envisions the end of the world is the possible discovery of a time machine in 2012. Instantaneously, he surmises, travelers from the future would zoom back to 2012 and we could all travel forward to the end of everything. This assures that all temporal states exist simultaneously somewhere outside time. People from the all over time would populate all eras simultaneously, which to McKenna signifies the end of things as we know them.

This is reminiscent of the Restaurant at the End of the Universe made famous in *the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* series of books. Time-travelers frequented a spot in the far future where the view was quite famous, for it was a view of the final destruction of the universe. The universe was destroyed every night before your very eyes, then the whole restaurant moved back in time one day before it opened again the next morning.

McKenna is quite concerned with eschatology, and the next discussion follows suit. The three discuss the current ecological crisis, and offer some guesses as to what our future may be like (2012 notwithstanding). Overpopulation is the reason they give, and space the best route of escape. McKenna wants to develop "human mushroom spores" to seed the universe with mankind's genetic information. I wonder if the

universe is ready. Also discussed is a plan for calendar reform (which I favor) and an ambitious but impractical stab at education reform. Some very interesting points are raised throughout. For those readers interested in McKenna's ideas on UFOs,

there's nary a word despite a whole chapter devoted to mythic entities, elementals, etc. Plenty of talk on mushrooms, though.

What if overpopulation were just a media myth to divert blame from the multinational corporations who are the real polluters? What if our cultural bias against the poor were unfounded in fact? Here's a riddle: Why did the hobo run towards the on-coming train? A: Because it was closer to that side of the bridge. Sometimes things have to get worse before they'll get better (or at least different). Like a cheap mystery novel, I'm often tempted to peek at the ending first. There's an old Irish toast that goes, "May you be alive at the end of the world." It's quoted in *Dialogues*. The Gnostics spoke of "using up" time, the deliberate generation of entropy to hasten the end of the world and its evils. It's what Robert Anton Wilson and Robert Shea called "immanentizing the eschaton" in the *Illuminatus* trilogy. I sometimes wonder if the capacity of the Earth for self-preservation isn't as great as man's capacity for destruction. Perhaps the coming crises will force us to evolve or die. Either way, the planet wins.

The discussion in *Dialogues* never really ends, it just stops. One gets the feeling of an open-ended conversation taking place between three old friends, sometimes agreeing, sometimes disagreeing. I'm sure next year's (and every year's) workshop at Esalen will be just as enlightening. For those of us that can't be there, *Dialogues* is the next best thing.

Saucers of the Illuminati

by Jay Katz

Atlanta: IllumiNet Press, 1993.

(Free catalog upon request from P.O. Box 2808, Lilburn, GA 30226)

Any reader at all familiar with the vast amount of conspiracy literature out there (and I do mean Out There) should know by now that the Fraternal Order of Free and Accepted Masons is to blame for absolutely everything (and I do mean Everything). In retrospect I find it surprising that none have said so before, but Mr. Katz believes UFOs are no exception to the rule. Katz sees in the UFO paradigm the outlines of a grand Masonic scheme striving towards the establishment of a One World Order and the fulfillment of Judeo-Christian messianic and millennial prophecies. Briefly, Katz's theory is this. A secret cabal of politically influential and financially backed Masons has been using various techniques of mind control to embed certain symbolic archetypes into the public psyche. Few would argue that alien abductions often take the form of initiations, but the symbols in question are even more compelling. These symbols come right out of Masonic lore, and have to do with the restoration of Jerusalem, the placement of the World King on the European throne, and the ushering in of a new age. This World King is directly descended from King David, and perhaps even from Christ himself (through Mary Magdalene), and thus rules by divine right over a One World Government whose state religion will be a monotheistic amalgam of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Yet within the cult itself there seem to be Gnostic and Luciferian trends, and perhaps even traces of Goddess worship. (The Masons may teach that God has a "feminine" counterpart to the Father, as did the Kabbalists. This is the Holy Spirit or Shekhina - the Divine Presence.) Let us see how all of this could be.

THE ARCHITECT OF ARCHITECTS

The Masons consistently refer to God as the Great Architect of the Universe (GAOTU). The Architect designs; the Mason builds. This has parallels with the kabbalistic doctrine of *tikkun*, by which man helps restore the Heavenly Kingdom through his efforts here on Earth. Illuminated manuscripts from the Middle Ages sometimes show God or Christ bearing a compass in one hand and a square in the other - the two primary symbols of the Masons. A widespread Masonic symbol shows these two tools crossed, the compass pointing up while the square points downward - indicative of the symbolic union between Heaven and Earth expressed in the mysteries of Freemasonry. In Lurianic Kabbalah, the circle is used to represent God's "emanation" in *all* directions, while the line denotes man's (Adam's) linear emanation. This probably refers to our existence in time. The circle is the product of the architect's compass, just as the line is formed by the mason's square. If one were to replace the compass by a pyramid and place an eye atop it, the analogy would be complete. Man builds a temple here on Earth to reach God above. Christ said our bodies were our temples, but Katz

believes the Masons seek to build not only a spiritual temple but a physical one as well: TIKKUN.

Often the letter "G" is shown in the center of this symbol, indicating not "God" but "GAOTU" (or "Gurdjieff", according to R.A. Wilson!). The shape of this symbol is itself a rough outline of the Star of David, with the location of the "G" between Heaven and Earth a telling allusion. Conspiracy researcher Michael Hoffman equates the "G" with the scythe of Saturn - the Mithraic demiurge. Katz says the Masons refer to the Deity as the "Lord of Light", yet the Bible clearly says that *Satan* is the Angel of Light, the fallen morning star. It is he alone who is god of this world. In Gnostic mythology, the god of this world is the demiurge or artificer - the *architect* who did not create the world but merely formed it from pre-existent materials. However, the Gnostics usually attributed to this Being a defective or even malicious constitution, while the good God remains aloof and hidden, unsullied by base physical matter. In very few cases does the paradox of demiurge worship take place. The few instances that come to mind are the "devil-worshipping" Yezidis of Iraq, the few anonymous Gnostics who left behind amulets and talismans paying homage to this Being out of fear and respect, and a certain branch of Lurianic Kabbalists who thought the God of Israel resided in the *sephiroth* Tiphareth (Beauty) as demiurge while the Father was unknowable and unapproachable by mortal men. Since Tiphareth occupies the center position on the kabbalistic Tree of Life, I find an interesting parallel in the Masons' placement of the letter "G" immediately *between* Heaven and Earth.

Jacques Vallee has documented the striking similarities between UFO contact and the legends of fairies, elves, and elementals. In fact, he once wrote that people euphemistically called these otherworldly beings the "Good Folk" out of fear and respect, just like the Gnostic groups mentioned above. It's rather like placating the neighborhood bully with your lunch money, or paying the Mafia "protection". The Masons on the other hand seem to follow the Kabbalists in praising the GAOTU as benevolent. This is certainly not the only reference to Kabbalah in Masonic doctrine; one obvious route of influence is through Bavaria - a major center of kabbalistic studies - and Adam Weishaupt's Illuminati. Masonic symbolism is drenched in Kabbalah.

ONE STAR IN SIGHT

Another major influence on the Masons is the Mysteries of Isis and Osiris practiced in ancient Egypt. Osiris is the murdered-and-resurrected Savior who resides over judgement in the Afterlife. His passion adumbrated Christ's by centuries, and it's not hard to see how a syncretistic group like the Masons could see in him an example of the Christ archetype. The Egyptian priests identified Osiris with Sirius, the Dog Star, whose heliacal rising one month after the summer equinox hailed the Nile's annual inundation. Thus were the heavens used to regulate the planting of crops - too soon and the flood waters would wipe out everything; too late and not enough water would be left for irrigation. Masonic historian Albert Pike refers to Sirius as the All-Seeing Eye of God, the eye-in-the-triangle which adorns every American dollar bill. In occult tradition it is the eye of Horus, the

Egyptian hawk-headed deity.

Aleister Crowley followed Papus and Levi and equated it with the pentagram. Kenneth Grant, head of the heterodox Typhonian OTO, calls it the Hidden God and the "Sun behind the Sun", referring to its sudden appearance after 70 days in the underworld and its equally sudden obliteration by the Sun's subsequent rising. Sirius was considered the eighth planet by the ancients (after the seven classic "planets" observable by the naked eye) because its relative proximity to Earth means that Sirius does not appear to follow the precession of the equinoxes. It reliably rose on July 21st every fourth year (according to the Julian calendar) during the entire 3000 years of the Egyptian dynasties, yet in the nineteenth year of Tiberius' reign it failed to do so because the precession had finally caught up with it. "Pan is dead," a voice echoed across the waters, signalling the end of the era of paganism and the onset of the Christian age. The morning star in this case is Sirius, the fallen Lucifer whom the Church Fathers equated with Pan (hence the Devil's satyr-like appearance).

Elsewhere I have documented my belief that the Order of the Eastern Star, a sort of "ladies' auxiliary" to the Masons, also pays homage to Sirius. "We have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship Him," reads their banner, an allusion to the Three Wise Men. Since the relationship between Osiris and Christ has been sufficiently made, I think it quite apparent that the Masons consider the Star of Bethlehem which heralded Jesus' birth to be none other than Sirius.

To the American Indians Sirius is the Happy Hunting Ground, where good Indians go when they die. It is a secret tradition of theirs that during its 70-day sojourn through the underworld Sirius is visible on Earth by day. This fact was known to the West as recently as the era of Magellan, who used the Silver Star to guide his ship during the daylight hours of early summer. Like the Masons, the Indians claim to be descended from "builders", in the Indians' case the Mississippi Valley dwellers who constructed great cities in the American south. Even the Mason-influenced Mormons were impressed with the Indians' tales of great pyramids built by the Aztecs. Katz likens this to Zechariah Sitchin's tales of ancient astronauts, the Sumerian builders from whom Katz believes Masons received their secret doctrine. In fact, the aforementioned Davidic bloodline actually can be traced back to the stars!

THE SIRIUS CONNECTION

Katz pulls several modern parallels out of his bag of tricks. One is Matti Koski, a Finnish expatriot formerly in Canada who claims the Royal Canadian Mounted Police were beaming messages into his brain. Hardly the "Dudley Do-Right" types they are pictured to be in the United States, the RCMP were actively associated with the CIA brainwashing LSD experiments in the 1950's. After returning to his native Finland, Koski's voices started to claim their true origin was Sirius, and that they were the voices of extraterrestrials rather than Mounties.

Popular New Age guru Robert Anton Wilson wrote a whole book around a series of psychic experiences which

seemed to emanate from the direction of the Dog Star. He drew heavily on Robert K.G. Temple's *The Sirius Mystery*

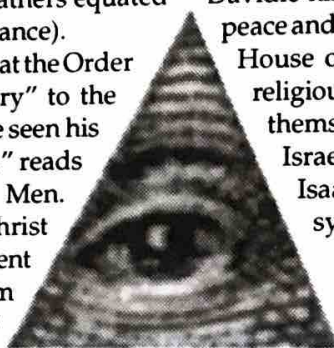
, and it is from Wilson that science fiction author Philip K. Dick learned of Temple's book. Katz devotes an entire chapter (recently excerpted in *Steamshovel Press* No. 8) to Phil's "pink beam" experiences. In the semi-autobiographical *VALIS* Phil claimed these experiences also came from the direction of Sirius. Katz takes a unique approach, demonstrating how these frightening yet fascinating experiences parallel Masonic symbolism from start to finish. I have documented elsewhere that Phil was also heavily influenced by the Kabbalah, and as Katz says, the Masons themselves learned much from these Jewish mystics.

George Hunt Williamson was an early contactee and an associate of George Adamski. In *Secret Places of the Lion* he mentions the importance of Sirius in esoteric tradition and asserts that it symbolizes the return of the Messiah, the Davidic king who will rule over all the world in an age of peace and prosperity. The lion, of course, is the symbol of the House of David. It is how the Ethiopians refer to their religious leader, head of the Coptic Church. (They consider themselves to be descended from the Lost Tribe of Israel.) It is also what students of the Kabbalah called Isaac Luria, kabbalistic innovator and founder of the systems known as Lurianic.

Vallee has speculated often on the nature of UFO incidents, each successive book examining a strange new theory. In *Revelations* he wondered if they are not staged for government intelligence agents and stumbled upon accidentally by the public. John Keel wrote *Operation Trojan Horse* around the premise that they are merely a diversion for something of greater consequence. Keel, remember, was one of the first to point out the importance of the psychic element in UFO contact. Katz feels that Mason-controlled groups are staging abductions using physical props and mind control techniques to prepare the masses for the longed-for Masonic age. One single abduction will influence thousands who hear of it; repeated over several decades it will establish a paradigm which will no longer seem so alien when it finally arrives.

By glossing over the differences between the three great religions of the Judeo-Christian tradition and emphasizing the similarities, the Masons will once again gain influence over the Dome of the Rock. Solomon's Temple will be rebuilt, the World King will be restored to his throne, and the Novus Ordo Seclorum will be established while in secret the Masonic "higher-ups" continue to practice their Mysteries. Then on May 5, 2000 a supernova will burst forth directly over the Great Pyramid of Giza, bright enough to be seen by day. Mankind will "see the light", so to speak; the herald of the Masonic new age will be the Eye of God reappearing inside a triangle of stars, just as the Sumerians recorded in their clay tablets 6,000 years ago.

(Other IllumiNet titles of interest to armchair ufologists are John Keel's *The Mothman Prophecies* and Salvador Freixado's *Visionaries, Mystics, and Contactees*. The latter was reviewed in *Crash Collusion* No. 3.)



INFORMATION PROLIFERATION

Zebra is pleased to announce a new publication devoted to exploring the manifold visions of Philip K. Dick.

The Palm Tree Garden

will be a one-shot publication, although future issues may follow if sufficient interest is generated. PTG will attempt to feature the most outrageous speculations concerning Dick's perception of reality. No editorial stance will be forthcoming, but rather an open forum covering all possible viewpoints.

Emphasis will be on symbolic and esoteric interpretations. Parallels may be found in the occult world, e.g. Aleister Crowley, John Dee, Immanuel Swedenborg, et al. More traditional systems such as gnosticism and neoplatonism are wide open for exploration. Even literary comparisons may be drawn: H.P. Lovecraft's nightmare-inspired prose is one example that comes to mind. In short, we are looking not so much for answers, but for possible leads out of the maze "of death".

One last possibility is this. Certain individuals may have actually undertaken attempts to contact VALIS, or may have been contacted spontaneously by same. Alternately, they may have had information beamed into their heads by renegade Rosicrucians, or disgruntled Soviet scientists playing around with psychotronics. Have you ever caught a glimpse beyond the Black Iron Prison, leaving you with the knowledge of How Things Really Are? If you have had any dreams or visions along these lines, a breakdown of reality, or just a frighteningly phildickian experience, we'd like to hear about it. Such reports may be submitted pseudonymously, if desired.

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